HISTORY OF THE

GERMAN PEOPLE

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# THE GERMAN PEOPLE

VOL. XV.

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# ISTORY OF THE
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# AFTER THE CLOSE OF THE IDDLE GES

BY OHANNES ANSSEN

VOL. XV.

COMMERCE AND CAPITAL—PRIVATE LIFE OF THE DIFFERENT CLASSES—MENDICANCY AND PÔOR RELIEF

TRANSLATED BY A. M. CHRISTIE

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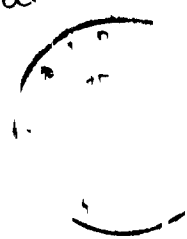

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# HISTORY

OF

# THE GERMAN PEOPLE

AT THE CLOSE OF THE MIDDLE AGES

## PART I

## CHAPTER I

### COMMERCE AND CAPITAL—USURERS: CHRISTIAN AND JEWISH

GERMAN trade in the sixteenth century no longer enjoyed the high position which it had reached by the close of the Middle Ages,[1] although down to the middle of that century it still retained an important place in the commerce of the world.[2]

[1] See our statements, vol. ii. p. 56 ff.

[2] ** 'The symptoms of decline in German trade,' says Steinhausen (*Der Kaufmann in der deutschen Vergangenheit*), 'became more marked in the second half of the (sixteenth) century, and manifold were the causes which contributed to this falling-off. Germany had undergone a complete revolution in its internal economy; in comparison to the brilliant prosperity of France, England and Holland, it had become reduced, politically, commercially and intellectually to a state of abject dependence. First and foremost among the causes which had weakened and impaired the economic forces of Germany may be reckoned the political conditions of the country. Whereas France, England and Holland had all three achieved national consolidation and unity, Germany was a prey to internal

In South Germany the towns of Augsburg and Nuremberg, with their financial and industrial strength, remained still for a long period the centre of foreign trade. Their relations with Upper Italy were especially close. Between Italy and Germany, indeed, in spite of the new trade route through Portugal, extensive commercial relations were kept up in many directions. The greater the increase of luxury in Germany the greater was the sale of all those finer cloths, silk fabrics, and stuffs inwrought with gold and silver, which were brought over from Italy. In Augsburg the Fuggers [1] and the Welsers had nearly the whole money-trade with Italy in their hands, and down even to the middle of the century numbers of Nuremberg merchants carried on extensive Italian business, especially with Venice. Italian merchants and money-changers, on the other hand, established themselves in South Germany. The Venetian, Bartholomew Viati, who had come to Nuremberg in 1550 in needy circumstances, rose by commerce and money-dealing to be one of the wealthiest merchants. He died worth 1,240,000 florins. Another great Italian merchant in Nuremberg was Torisani of Florence. The long series of Franco-German and Spanish wars, which hindered Italy from attaining to settled order, worked perniciously also on the trade between Germany and Italy; but

division and the working of antagonistic forces. The religious dissensions enormously aggravated the evil, and added to them were the foreign and civil wars (of equally sinister result to Italy, so closely bound up with us by commerce) which, as the Suabian Circle said in 1582, "were alone sufficient to have brought the whole German empire to decay and ruin." '

[1] ** Cp. Ehrenberg, *Das Zeitalter der Fugger*, Jena 1896 (2 vols.), and Grupp, *Geldwirtschaft*, 196, fol. 202.

it was the increasingly anarchic condition of Germany herself, and the consequent 'weakness and decline' of German burgher life, that first caused a serious breach in the commercial relations of the two countries.[1]

With France, pre-eminently with Lyons, Germany still kept up lively commercial intercourse, and the Frenchman, Innocent Gentillet, praised, in 1585, the honesty and uprightness of German merchants. 'These merchants,' he wrote, 'do not overcharge the purchasers, and do not seek to make unfair profits out of people who do not understand the true value of goods.'[2] Very unpraiseworthy, on the contrary, was the part played by the greater German merchants during the wars of Charles V. with France. Thinking only of their own commercial advantages, they laid themselves out, in return for favourable storage rights and free passes, to supply frequent large loans to the French crown, and advanced immense sums in this way; not only Protestant auxiliary troops, but German capital of Protestant bankers, contributed to support the hostile endeavours of the French monarchy against the German empire. The reward for such dealings did not fail. When the Augsburg merchants, who alone, independently of the merchants of other imperial cities, had a claim of 700,000 crowns on France, sent a deputation in 1559 to King Francis II., they received 'good assurances,' but no money. The merchants of Augsburg and Nuremberg became 'the sport of the French Treasury.'[3]

[1] Falke, *Gesch. des Handels*, ii. 21 ff. Höfler, *Betrachtungen*, 5 ff.

[2] Fischer, *Gesch. des teutschen Handels*, ii. 445–446.

[3] v. Stetten, i. 536; cp. Falke, *Gesch. des Handels*, ii. 40–41. ** Ehrenberg, ii. 98 ff., 166. See our statements, vol. vi. 461, n. 2.

Like Augsburg, Frankfort-on-the-Maine also became one of the most important money and exchange marts. To the fairs held at Frankfort buyers and sellers flocked, not only from all parts of Germany and the Netherlands, but also from France and Italy, from Poland and England; German and foreign merchants concluded their bargains there, exchanged their goods, made out their orders. The town was called 'the chief of all the fairs in the world.' [1]

The richest mine of wealth for South Germany was its trade with Antwerp. Before the outbreak of the politico-religious revolution in the Netherlands, Antwerp, as the emporium of Portuguese and Spanish trade, the connecting point and the chief market of the whole world-trade, had held one of the first positions in the north-eastern and north-western parts of Europe; over one thousand foreign mercantile houses were established there; even kings had their factories and settlements in this town. At Antwerp, it was said, more extensive business was

[1] The fair and stock-exchange system developed at Frankfort, as compared with Genoa, as Grupp (*Geldwirtschaft*, 202) points out, 'in much more primitive forms. Here barter and ready money was the rule; but there was no uniform standard of exchange and banking. For every separate town and state there was a separate rate of coinage, and when the Emperor wanted to introduce uniform minting the council opposed the measure. This hindered any vigorous growth of the Frankfort money market, and German trade and industry were consequently thrown back. The Frankfort exchange maintained itself indeed through all the vicissitudes of the unfortunate history of later Germany, but Frankfort merchants were mostly foreigners, above all English, Dutch and also Italian.' The praise of the Frankfort fairs was sung by the distinguished Henry Stephanus in a special pamphlet: *Francofordiense emporium sive Francofordienses nundinae*, s. l. 1574. A reprint of this pamphlet, now very rare, has been prepared by Isid. Liseux, Paris, 1875.

accomplished in one month than at Venice, during its best times, in two years.[1] The storms of the revolution disturbed the prosperity of this town, as indeed that of the Netherlands in general. When the Italian writer, Luigi Guicciardini, who in the year 1566 had drawn a brilliant picture of this prosperity, republished his book in 1580, he added the words: 'The present time is to the earlier one which I have here described, as is night to day.'[2]

By the downfall of Antwerp the whole Rhine commerce lost its significance. The Imperial Estates quietly allowed the Dutch to bar free passage and navigation on the Rhine and to use this river for reducing the empire, in its most productive and prosperous territories, to complete dependence on themselves. 'All commerce and exchange,' said the free and imperial cities in 1576, in a petition to the Estates assembled at Ratisbon, 'are obstructed, the taxes and imposts become higher and higher.' Trade had indeed suffered no slight depression through the wars with France; this, however, was not so serious as long as the passage to the Netherlands and to the sea remained open; but since through the Dutch insurrection trade had lost its nearest opportunity with eastern and other kingdoms and lands, the land and waterways had become deserted, food had grown very scarce in the

[1] See our statements, vol. viii. p. 11. ** See also Ritter, *Deutsche Gesch.*, i. 46; the work of Ehrenberg quoted at p. 2, and also Lotz in the *Allg. Ztg.* 1897, Beil. No. 134, and Grupp, *Geldwirtschaft*, 200.

[2] Ranke, *Fürsten und Völker*, i. 435 ff. ** Cf. A. v. Peez, *Wie verlor Süddeutschland seinen Anteil am Welthandel?* (How did South Germany lose its share in the world-commerce?) *Allg. Ztg.* 1900, Beil. No. 63.

dominions of all the imperial princes, and the poor people were everywhere so distressed by the long continued reign of high prices that if these crushing evils 'were not speedily remedied by the action of His Imperial Majesty and the Electors, a pitiful downfall of the common fatherland must inevitably set in.'[1] Nevertheless, of anything in the shape of 'serious, efficient intervention' there was no question. Six years later, in 1582, the Electors of Mayence and Trèves said at the Diet of Augsburg that 'whereas German commerce, hitherto free and unhindered right away to the sea, was now bound with heavy chains, they would in future only be able to carry on trade with the permission of the Dutch;[2] the Dutch and the Spaniards behaved as though they were "unlimited lords in the empire."' Like the Rhine, the Scheldt (Escaut), too, was closed to the Germans, and an arbitrary system of tolls and imposts crippled the backbone of their commerce. It was Amsterdam pre-eminently which undermined all German trade, and German merchants themselves had a hand in founding the commercial might of Amsterdam; this town for some length of time owed its well-being chiefly to the Hanseatic League, which had transferred its habitat thence from Antwerp.[3]

The Hanseatic League, towards the end of the fifteenth century and at the beginning of the sixteenth, had ruled the world-commerce of the north-western

[1] Falke, *Zollwesen*, 162–163.

[2] See our statements, vol. ix. 35 ff. Quetsch, 294–295.

[3] Fischer, ii. 642. Höfler, *Betrachtungen*, 8 ff. ** Cf. G. von Below, 'Die Schädigung der Rheinfischerei durch die Niederländer in der zweiten Hälfte des 16ten Jahrhunderts,' in the *Zeitschr. für Sozial und Wirtschaftsgeschichte* (Weimar, 1896), iv. 119 ff.

half of Europe; then, however, it had begun to sink gradually to its downfall, chiefly, indeed, owing to the increasing political powerlessness of the empire, which was unable to render it any support in its contests with rising foreign nations, and also in consequence of the growing and universal state of religious dissension, which hindered any compact, uniform existence of the League.[1]

In the Scandinavian North, where in the two first decades of the century the League still maintained its old supremacy, and where in 1523 by its marine power

[1] Concerning the effects of the Church schism on the Hanseatic League the Protestant Barthold says in his *History of the Hansa*, iii. 295–296: 'Just as our fatherland brought only malediction on itself by the new Church schism, so too the Reformation brought little of good to the Hanseatic League. First of all the change in the confession of faith estranged from the Lutheran Hansa towns not only the Emperor as their appointed protector, but also many places in which, as in Cologne, Osnabrück, Münster, Paderborn, Dortmund, the old Church had retained its hold either permanently, or for a time. Secondly the League, with the Protestant princes, misused to alien ends, involved our trading towns, whose security and advantage depended entirely on strict impartiality, in perilous and costly imperial wars, brought them into dependence on the princes, and widened very materially the breach already beginning. Further, the fanaticism of the next generation made it difficult, if not impossible, to institute common trade alliances; the Christian world, forgetful of all historic relations and material advantages, divided itself into Catholic and non-Catholic; the Hanseatic merchant was no longer merely a merchant, but an enthusiast for his creed and a spreader of the poison of heresy, and as such he was not only avoided and feared, but was himself in danger of losing life and property. Finally, heated partisanship in religious doctrinal controversies worked such a transformation in the shrewd, unprejudiced character of the Hansa League, and brought it to such a degree under the influence of intolerant, domineering pastors, that, absurd as it seems, Lutheran "new-religiousness" came to be regarded as a necessary Hanseatic qualification, and a Lutheran papacy endeavoured to make use of the Hanseatic League—weak as it had already shown itself—as an instrument for bringing back differently thinking members, such as Bremen, to the true salvation.'

it had broken the Northern Union, it now soon lost the key to its might--the Danish Seas. It was under the dominion, not so much of the Danes and Swedes as of its neighbours and countrymen the Holsteiners, and the German princes allied with the latter. After Christian of Holstein had ascended the Danish throne as Christian III., and with the help of the Smalkald princes, in 1535, had inflicted on the town of Lübeck a decisive defeat, the political importance of the Hanseatic League had gone to the ground, its whole position had received a death-blow; dominion over the Sund and the German Ocean was snatched from the Germans,[1] and venal German peers were found to defend the Sund-toll introduced by Christian as an undoubtedly just measure.[2]

This Sund-toll was the actual 'gold mine' of the King. 'It seems worthy of credence,' wrote Samuel Kircher in an account of travels in 1586, 'that the Sund is the greatest source of revenue of the Kingdom of Denmark.'[3]

The most oppressive of the taxes was the lastage-tax imposed in 1563, which amounted, for instance, to ten thalers for a load (or last) of corn, to one thaler for six ship's pounds of bacon, one thaler for a load of salt, and for every empty salt-carrying ship, to a quarter of a Joachims-thaler for every load of salt it was able to carry. 'The lastage tax,' said Lübeck in the name of the League at the Diet at Augsburg in 1582, 'was such a burden that if it was not abolished, the town

[1] See our statements, vol. v. 484, 485. ** And Schäfer, *Gesch. von Dänemark* (Gotha, 1893), iv. 328 ff.

[2] Barthold, *Gesch. der Hansa*, iii. 423.

[3] *Bibl. des Literarischen Vereins*, 86, 57.

and all the citizens would in a few years come to utter ruin, and nothing but a waste city would be left, whilst all ready money would flow into Denmark.' And yet not alone Lübeck and the Hansa towns, but all people in general who wanted to navigate to and from the Baltic Sea, were oppressed by this monstrous tax which inordinately heightened the price of all goods. Emperor and Estates, in order to remove this intolerable grievance, should issue an edict to the effect that 'all subjects of the Danish King, in their trading in the Empire, should be charged with equally high tolls and duties, or else that the Hansa League should be entitled, by sentence of the Imperial Chamber, to indemnify themselves on the German provinces of the Danish King.'

However, the Emperor and the Estates only passed the resolution that in their name, but at the expense of the Hansa towns, an embassy should be sent to Copenhagen to make the necessary representations to the King. Not even this decision was carried into effect. The sole result of Lübeck's petitioning was that, for a certain space of time, a double salt-tax was imposed on the town by the King.[1]

Under King Christian IV. the Hansa towns were treated in the most disgraceful manner. 'In his kingdom,' he informed them, 'they possessed no rights whatever; with gifts and offerings they were to appear humbly before his throne; he should impose as many taxes as he chose, for he was the manager in his own monarchy, and had to give account to nobody.'[2] The revenue which the Sund-toll brought in to the Danish

[1] Häberlin, xii. 286 ff. Sartorius, iii. 111–114.

[2] Sartorius, iii. 114–120.

throne within half a century is reckoned at something over twenty millions of gold.[1]

In Norway and Sweden, also, the Hanseatic Leaguers were burdened with unheard-of taxes. The establishment that held its ground longest was the 'Komtoor' at Bergen, but it could not permanently stand out against the competition with other nations, notably with the Dutch and the English; the German merchants there were treated by the Kings like subjects, until at last the burghers of the town took possession of most of the courts and dwelling-rooms of the Komtoor and drove the Germans out.

In Sweden the members of the Hansa League had lost all their traditional liberties in 1548 through Gustavus Vasa. When they appealed to his successor Eric XIV. for the restoration of these liberties they received in 1561 the answer: 'These liberties were in opposition to the laws and the prosperity of the kingdom; only "out of favour" would the King grant to the towns of Lübeck, Hamburg, Dantzic and Rostock (but not to the other Hansa towns) the right of free trade in the maritime towns, but this only on condition that in each town of the League his (the King's) subjects should be allowed to have a house of business, and that to him himself would be granted in all the territories belonging to the said towns the right of free enlistment of men to be used by him in case of war, in any way he might please; besides this, all the towns must abstain from any commerce with the Russians.' In 1561 Eric invaded Esthland and took possession of Reval, deprived the Hanseats in the following year of the right of navigating the river Narva, which had

[1] Sartorius, iii. 112.

become Russian, and aimed at bringing to 'his' town of Reval the monopoly of Russian trade. Thereupon Lübeck, meagrely supported by the sister towns, embarked once more on a bitter war for this 'fountain' of all might. It was its last war. For seven years (1563–1570) this heavy and gruesome contest, which sent many thousands to their death and plunged the town of Lübeck in a frightful state of bankruptcy, dragged on its length. The Peace of Stettin in 1570 promised the Lübeckers free intercourse with Russia, but the treaty was no sooner made than broken; at the end of the century the German towns were again almost entirely excluded from trade with Russia, and the Swedish crown had become the inheritor of the Hansa League in the domain of the Baltic, and possessor of most of its inland settlements. At Novgorod, where formerly the Hanse League had held nearly all the trade in its hands, the German settlement had at that time completely succumbed. Franz Nyenstädt, who visited the German court there in 1570, found only some slight remains of the stone church of St. Peter, one single small apartment, and a wooden hut which served him and his servant as shelter. Of the 'ancient glory' nothing more was to be seen. When in 1603 the Hanseats entered into negotiations with the Czar, Boris Godunov, in order to recover their former trading rights in Russia, the great monarch refused the right of existence to the Hansa League; to the Lübeckers only would he grant a free charter, and the Lübeck merchants (Novgorodfahrer) who traded with Novgorod quartered the portrait of the Czar in their arms.[1]

[1] Sartorius, iii. 133–183. Schlözer, *Verfall der Hansa*, 95, 207, 227, No. 364. Beer, ii. 407–408.

'So long as the Hansa League,' wrote Quade von Kinckelbach in 1609, 'retained its power, the might of foreign nations could not increase and grow; but when care was no longer taken to protect the rights and legitimacy of the Hansa towns, not the might only but the arrogance of foreign peoples together with intolerable pride, lifted itself up, and became so insolent that they thought they need fear no one but might persecute with war in the most gruesome manner, wheresoever and whomsoever they chose.'[1]

In England, under King Henry VII., the time had long gone by when, according to the words of the President of the London 'Stahlhof,' the Hansa Leaguers had the whole kingdom 'under their thumbs';[2] but until beyond the middle of the sixteenth century they continued to dominate the English market by their trade and their industrial zeal. And if under Henry VIII. their position seemed at times in such danger that Hamburg, for instance, in 1540 thought it advisable to remove all the bare cash and silver vessels from the head-quarters of the League, viz. the 'Stahlhof,'[3] nevertheless the King always took them back again under his protection, because he looked upon them and used them as natural allies against the Emperor and the Catholic powers, and needed their support and their loans in his financial affairs.[4] Henry's successor, Edward VI., granted them again in 1547 complete restitution

[1] Quade von Kinckelbach, *Teutsche Nation Herligkeit* (Cologne on the Rhine, 1609), p. 389; cf. 390, 392.

[2] Sartorius, iii. 394.

[3] Fischer, ii. 609. Concerning the 'Stahlhof' see our statements, vol. ii. p. 44.

[4] Schanz, *Englische Handelspolitik*, i. 226. Falke, *Geschichte des Handels*, ii. 102.

of old privileges and liberties, but by so doing he brought on himself the violent opposition of English merchants. 'The Hansa Leaguers,' the latter complained in 1551, 'command the English markets, settle at their pleasure the prices of imports and exports, and have in this very year exported 44,000 pieces of English cloth, whereas we, being less privileged, have only been able to export 1100 pieces.' [1]

In consequence of these complaints, Edward, in 1552, declared all the Hanseatic rights and privileges to be null and void, and raised the duty on Hanseatic goods from 1 per cent. to 20 per cent. Queen Mary, who succeeded Edward in 1553, was more favourably disposed to the Hansa Leaguers; she gave them back their old liberties, at the same time requiring that English citizens in the Hansa towns should have the same liberties granted them. To this, however, the Hanseats would not agree. Foolishly and unreasonably they repudiated equality of rights with the English, and obstinately refused the latter in the Baltic towns the privileges which they on their part had claimed in England.[2]

Then as before they demanded of the English crown the confirmation of their ancient 'well-earned' rights, but they could not in any way gain their point with a sovereign like Queen Elizabeth, who went on the policy of 'keeping down all that was foreign in her kingdom' and of advancing by every possible means the steadily growing development of English commerce. The endeavours of the confederate towns, through 'pleadings from the

[1] Sartorius, iii. 313, 324.

[2] Cf. D. Schäfer in the *Jahrbücher für Nationalökonomie* (new series), vii. 96 ff.

Emperor and the Empire' to move the Queen in their favour, were all unavailing. The English minister Cecil, so the directors of the London factory reported to Lübeck in February 1568, 'had rated the honourable towns, on account of their representations to the Emperor, with language almost rude and vulgar'; they were in fact also themselves convinced that the entreaties of all the potentates of the whole of Christendom 'would have no result with this Queen.'[1] Elizabeth was kept only too well informed by the reports of her ambassadors of the internal dissensions of the empire, and of its incapacity to support the North German trading towns with serious and warlike measures; many Protestant German princes were in her pay and service, and even among the Hansa towns—mutually discordant—she knew how to find promoters of her own endeavours. Eagerly Hamburg opened its gates to the so-called 'merchant adventurers'[2] (English traders) and concluded with them in 1567 a formal treaty for ten years, by which the English obtained free exit and entry and 'privileged residence.' In 1568, four, in the following year twenty-eight, English ships laden with cloth and wool, the latter to the value of 700,000 thalers, came into the port of Hamburg; and thence the English wool and cloth trade penetrated further and further into the interior of the empire.[3] 'Hamburg,' wrote

[1] Sartorius, iii. 348.

[2] ** Cf. Ehrenberg, *Hamburg und England in Zeitalter der Königin Elisabeth*, Jena, 1896. See also Schäfer, 'Deutschland und England in Welthandel des 16ten Jahrhunderts' (*Preuss. Jahrb.*, 83 ff., 269 ff.), who says that it was not only energy and discipline but also 'reckless violence, flattering representations, malicious calumny, brutal violation of rights, fraudulent over-reaching and adulteration' which brought victory to the English.

[3] Falke, *Zollwesen*, 183.

the Lübeckers in 1581, 'was the cause of all the misfortune, because it separated itself and independently of the rest accorded privileges to the English; whenever at Diets of the League they had wanted to confer together on this question the Hamburg delegates always said they had orders to leave the meeting.' 'It is only reasonable to complain that it has now, alas, come to this, and we can see it before our eyes, that to our disgrace, ridicule and final ruin, the principal members are falling away from us, are pulling down what we build up, and making such a breach between us and the Komtoors that to all eternity it will never be possible to bring them together again and repair the mischief done. All this proceeds solely from pernicious egotism, which is the one source of all the misfortune and ruin of the society.' [1]

Still, in 1554 the Hanseats had within ten months exported 36,000 pieces of cloth from England, and they estimated their gains by this transaction at £61,254 sterling, or 385,896 Karlsgulden.[2] But already in the last third of the century the real English trade in cloth and wool dominated the German markets. The English cloths and English wool, the Hansa represented to the Imperial Estates in 1582, had become at least half as dear again, and of the 200,000 pieces which were exported by Englishmen, three-quarters at least came to Germany; the German cloth manufacturers were reduced to such extremity that numbers of towns which had before counted many hundreds of cloth-makers and journeymen innumerable, were now either entirely without master workmen, or else had very

[1] Sartorius, iii. 357 ff., 387–388. [2] *Ibid.* iii. 333–335.

few; and these few were obliged to content themselves with making inferior cloth. At the fairs at Frankfort it was principally English cloth that was sold. In a memorandum of the Saxon electoral councillors in 1597 it was pointed out that by the high prices which the 'merchant adventurers' charged for their cloth nearly a million of money went yearly to England, that the empire was drained of ready money, and the subjects impoverished, for there was now scarcely a single servant or peasant girl who did not have some of her wearing apparel made of English cloth; at the same time the business of the cloth-makers was being ruined and food getting scarce. Whereas foreign cloth was imported in such quantities and wool exported in an equally extensive manner, trade and business in home cloth, formerly sent in such large quantities to Poland and other neighbouring countries, were also in a parlous condition.[1] At the end of the century, in the Nether Saxon circle alone, it was reckoned that within fifty years about thirty-two millions of gold guldens had gone out of the country for purchasing English cloth.[2]

The imperial edict issued on August 1, 1597, in consequence of the unwearied importuning of the Hansa that 'all English people and English wares should within three months be banished from all parts of the empire,' resulted only in shame and infamy; in consequence of this edict the Hanseats saw the last miserable remnant of their former commercial supremacy annihilated in England. On January 23, 1598,

[1] Falke, *Zollwesen*, 197.

[2] Häberlin, xii. 273 ff. Falke, *Geschichte des Handels*, ii. 109; *Zollwesen*, 190. Fischer, ii. 620; cf. *Jahrbücher für Nationalökonomie*, vi. 250, n. 405.

the merchants of the London 'Stahlhof' received orders from the Queen 'within fourteen days to evacuate England, with the exception of the subjects of the King of Poland, provided they renounced their connection with the Hansa.' All that the Hanseats could obtain was a respite of a few months. At the end of July the Privy Council instructed the Lord Mayor and the Sheriffs of London to take possession of the 'Stahlhof' in the name of the Queen and to drive the Germans out of their houses. On the latter opposing resistance to the seizure of their property and showing themselves unwilling to go, the Lord Mayor threatened violence, and 'so finally,' wrote the Stahlhof brethren to Lübeck, 'because no other course was possible, with sorrow in our hearts, the alderman walking in front, and we others following behind, we went out of the gate, and the gate was closed after us: we were not even allowed to remain there for the night. God have pity on us!'[1]

While thus the downfall of the Hansa had become an accomplished fact, the English, despite all imperial decrees, asserted themselves in the empire. Neither from Elbing nor from Stade could the merchant adventurers who had established their settlements there be driven out. In the one year 1600, for instance, these traders exported, besides coloured cloth of all sorts, 60,000 pieces of white linen to the value of more than a million pounds sterling.[2]

'Added to all the hopeless dangers to which the Hansa was exposed from foreign potentates, was the melancholy fact that in proportion as its external

[1] Sartorius, iii. 404–408. Lappenberg, *Urkundliche Geschichte des Londoner Stahlhofs* (Hamburg, 1851), p. 102 ff.

[2] Falke, ii. 111.

commerce declined, the internal dissensions between the Hansa towns themselves and their mutual jealousy went on increasing; in a petty shopkeeper spirit the members of the League shut themselves up from each other and endeavoured to hinder all interchange of business amongst themselves by every variety of limitation, by enforced monopolies, by staple and deposit laws.'

Thus the Bremen and Lüneburg Hanseats complained of a tax arbitrarily imposed at Hamburg; Upper Rhenish towns complained that at Hamburg they had to pay herring tax, freight duty and tonnage; the Saxon towns that the goods which they sent to Hamburg they were obliged to sell at low prices and to pay an oar-tax. In like manner Rostock complained of Lübeck on account of imposition of taxes, Minden of Bremen for hindering navigation.[1] 'Anything in the nature of beneficial, harmonious consultation could no longer be effected;' as if in despair the Hanseatic syndic-general John Domann exclaimed in 1606, in a 'Song of the German Hansa':

Vorzeiten ward ihr Hänse,
Berühmet mit der Tat;
Jetzt sagt man seid ihr Gänse,
Von schlechter Tat und Rat.

(Formerly you were Hanseats
Famous for your deeds;
Now say they you are geese
Of deeds and counsel bad.)[2]

But just as in the midst of peace the Hansa towns

[1] Sartorius, iii. 530, note. Wächter, *Histor. Nachlass*, i. 230 ff. Schmoller, *Nationalökonomische Ansichten*, 266 ff.

[2] *Zeitschr. für Hamburgs Gesch.*, ii. 457 (cf. 455); cf. *Histor.-polit. Bl.*, 121, 161.

fought each other with imposition and augmentation of fresh tolls and duties, so in the empire in general a similar warfare was carried on between all the separate districts.

The state receipts in taxes, the empire's most fruitful and certain source of revenue, had, at the close of the Middle Ages, become completely broken up; the custom-houses also had gradually passed into the possession of territorial lords and their subjects. The sovereign-toll-right was no longer inherent in the royal power, but, on the contrary, recognised by the latter as a privilege of the College of Electors. Charles V. promised in his election charter of 1519 that 'whereas the German nation and Holy Roman Empire was already taxed to the uttermost both by land and water,' he would not without the advice, knowledge and will of the electors, sanction the imposition of any new taxes, nor the augmentation of any old ones. A proposal made at the Nuremberg Diet of 1523, for a fresh imperial toll, which was intended by means of a completely organised system of frontier duties to tax the whole foreign trade of Germany for the maintenance of the Imperial Chamber, the Imperial Government and the management of the public peace (Landsfrieden), was shipwrecked by the opposition of the towns, which, in view of the innumerable custom-houses already existing, did not wish to see fresh ones erected.[1] What Charles V. had promised in his election charter the succeeding emperors were also obliged to promise; all the same, however, in order to procure themselves devoted servants and followers among territorial lords and communities, they were wont to make fresh taxes

[1] See our remarks, vol. iii. 317 ff.

or to increase old ones on their own sole authority; or at any rate to support similar attempts on the part of the electors.[1]

The territorial princes, also, regardless of the constitution of the empire, took upon themselves to impose fresh taxes or increase old ones, and thus 'through the heightened prices of all indispensable goods the German nation from one decade to another became more and more crippled and drained.' Austria and Brandenburg were the first to assert the unconditional independence of territorial lords in the matter of taxation towards the empire and the other princes. Some of the princes raised taxes to three or four times their original amount. Such had been the case, for instance, since 1566, in Pfalz-Zweibrücken in all the custom-houses of the Count Palatine. At Laubach and Erbach, within a circuit of half a mile, the rate of taxation for nine carts and one carriage was eighty florins, for a single horse in a cart, four florins and eight albuses. From Bremen upwards the number of toll-gates within twenty-three miles amounted to twenty-two; the tax for a barrel of wine, from Dresden to Hamburg, payable at thirty toll-gates, was nine thalers, nine groschen, four pfennig. In consequence of the revolution in the Netherlands the taxes were so enormously raised that in 1594, for instance, the tax for a cartload of wine, from Cologne to Holland, was forty thalers, as against eight thalers in former years, for a load of herrings, from Holland to Cologne forty-eight and fifty thalers, instead of six to eight. Every ship

[1] Margrave Hans von Küstrin stated in his will of June 29, 1560, that he had been favoured with so many new taxes on land and water, that these brought him in more ready money than all the lands he held of the Emperor. *Märksche Forschungen*, xiii. 482.

which wanted to pass from the Waal into the Rhine had to pay a toll of 125 florins.[1]

Among the Imperial Estates, from the greatest to the least, there reigned, both as regards taxation and export laws by which the different districts obstructed each other, a civil war of all against all: at imperial and circle diets they incessantly raised complaints against each other and blamed each other reciprocally for 'oppression and loss of all industry and commerce.'[2]

'Added to the highly oppressive and almost intolerable land and water taxes which are the ruin of all inland trade, there is also the insecurity of the imperial roads and highways, which are beset with so great danger to merchants and their goods from highway robbers.'[3]

'Another kind of plague,' so the merchants almost

[1] Falke, *Zollwesen*, 147 ff., 159, 170 ff., 202 ff., 221. Schmoller in the *Zeitschr. für preussische Geschichte und Landeskunde*, 19, 290 ff.; cf. Schmoller, *Nationalökonomische Ansichten*, 646–647. In the duchy of Bavaria there were twenty-seven water and eighty-nine land tolls. A new tax introduced in 1548 by Duke William IV. for agricultural products and cattle, taken out of the country, realised, for instance, in the fifteen custom-houses of the Straubing exchequer in the very first year more than 1963 florins. The receipts of the Maut at Straubing amounted in 1550 to 1214 pounds, in 1571 to 2348 pounds, in 1583 to 5981 florins (the proportion between the pound and the gulden was about 28 : 100), in 1589 to 10,525 florins. Cf. the instructive treatise of J. Mondschein, *Die Straubinger Donaumaut im 16ten Jahrhundert* (published in connection with the fiftieth anniversary of the royal *Realschule* at Straubing, 1887), ss. 155, 188, 194.

[2] ** Concerning the customs war of Pomerania and Brandenburg in the sixteenth century, cf. Spahn, *Verfassungs- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte des Herzogtums Pommern*, 150 ff., where besides Schmoller's article (*Zeitschr. für preuss. Geschichte u. Landeskunde*, 19) documentary material is also made use of.

[3] Of public insecurity, highway robberies and incendiaries we shall treat in a later section.

universally complained, as seriously affecting small inland traders, 'is the swarm of hawkers and vendors who perambulate the towns and villages, and who are not proceeded against, as for the protection of inland trade they ought to be, with suitable prohibitions and punishments.' 'Almost in all places,' said the Suabian Circle in 1582, in a memorandum to the Diet at Augsburg, 'the foreign Savoyards and hawkers are to be seen, and it is not only to the common people in the villages and hamlets that they offer their goods, but they pester the nobility and the upper classes in all the castles, courts, convents and private dwellings, beyond all bearing. And they offer the common people the inducement of bringing their goods, such as stuffs, groceries and all necessaries to their very door, and also allow them credit for a period of time (though they make them pay all the more heavily in the end), so that they may be paid in the autumn and harvest-time with fruits and wine, and thus they entice the poor people to themselves in such a manner, that, in order to avoid cash payments, they no longer go to the towns and to the markets to make their purchases, but wait for these foreign hawkers. At the time when the fruits and the wine are gathered in these hawkers appear again, demand their payment and take the poor man's stock of provisions out of his very hand. In some places they have actually gone so far as to hire storerooms and cellars to keep the fruit and the wine. In this way they send up the prices of all victuals, drain the poor man, restrict the trade of the country, enrich themselves by usury, pay no taxes anywhere themselves, and are subject and submissive neither to the empire nor to the Estates. Serious measures should, therefore, be

enforced in the empire for the abolition of this evil and the exclusion of all foreign traders from the country.'[1]

Nevertheless the evil continued as before.[2]

But the pernicious effect on trade and commerce of all this foreign hawking was in no way comparable to that of the trading associations formed for the purpose of buying up, and raising prices, concerning which companies, even at the close of the Middle Ages and throughout the whole sixteenth century, it was continuously complained at imperial, circle, and provincial diets that they were to blame not only for the increased prices of provisions and wares, but also for the increase of imports into and the decrease of exports from the empire.[3]

Almost at every diet stringent orders were issued against these injurious practices, orders, however, which were never put into effect.[4] Against the undertakings

[1] Häberlin, xii. 612–614. ** Cf. Grupp, *Geldwirtschaft*, 204.

[2] The Basle Guild said in 1598 concerning the foreign hawkers: 'They swarm about everywhere from house to house and from farm to farm, in the hostels of towns, and in country inns, and they may be seen daily crowding outside churches at weddings and on other such occasions; they also frequent the markets and delude the country-folk especially with their false wares which they offer as cheap bargains.' Geering, 574 ff. In Bavaria in 1605 the complaint was raised that 'The Savoyard vendors perambulate the whole land, defraud the peasants and other people with their goods, and have actually vaults to house their wares in.' v. Freyberg, i. *Beilage*, p. 18; cf. p. 31. In Brandenburg an edict was issued against the foreign hawkers in 1536. Mylius, vi. Part I. 38–39. In Würtemberg it was decreed in 1549 that 'the Italian and other foreign vendors should no longer be allowed to sell in towns and villages, but only to attend the usual yearly markets.' Reyscher, xii. 165; cf. 577 and ii. 304.

[3] See our statements, vol. ii. 80 ff., and vol. iv. 154–156. ** See further Wiebe, *Zur Gesch. der Preisrevolution des 16ten u. 17ten Jahrhunderten*, Leipzig, 1895, and also *Histor.-polit. Bl.*, 118, 434 ff., where there are also fuller details respecting the opinions of contemporaries on the rise of prices. See also Grupp in the *Allg. Ztg.*, 1897, Beil. No. 99, 100.

[4] Concerning the edicts of the years 1524–1577, cf. Fischer, iv. 802–809.

of the trading companies and the great capitalists, individual merchants with only small capital at their disposal were powerless. As early as 1557 the town delegates assembled at Ratisbon said in an address to King Ferdinand I.: 'If it should come to pass that general business and trade in the Holy Empire were to become so greatly limited and restricted as to be solely in the hands and the power of a few persons of fortune, this would not only lead to the final downfall and ruin of the honourable towns, but would also cause grievous disaster to all the subjects of the empire.'[1]

If, as often happened, for one reason or another, there was a suspension of payment by the trading companies or the great capitalists, countless numbers who had greater or smaller shares in the undertakings, or who had lent them money on usurious interest, were plunged into ruin; sometimes whole neighbourhoods were ruined. When, for instance, the Höchstetters at Augsburg, who 'for a time had a million gulden invested in their company,' failed in 1529 to the amount of 800,000 gulden, not only princes, counts and nobles, but also peasants, men-servants and maid-servants suffered great loss.[2] Since the middle of the century bankrupts had been very plentiful in Augsburg. In 1562 six merchant houses of good standing had involved their creditors in heavy losses. George Neumayr, in 1572, defrauded his creditors of 200,000 gulden.[3] When in 1574 the association of

[1] *Frankfurter Reichstagsakten*, 64[b], fol. 206.

[2] Concerning the enterprises and the bankruptcy of the Höchstetters see our remarks, vol. i. 87.

[3] v. Stetten, *Geschichte von Augsburg*, i. 541, 551, 604. Wagenseil, ii. 293. ** Concerning the increase of bankruptcy, especially in Augsburg, see also Steinhausen, *Der Kaufmann in der deutschen Vergangenheit*, 86 ff.

the Manlichs, consisting of commercial parvenus, declared itself bankrupt with debts to the amount of 700,000 gulden, and in the same year three other merchants failed, the number who were ruined in consequence was so great that the Bishop of Augsburg announced from the pulpit that whoever in future should lend money to the trading companies, would be excluded from Holy Communion. Melchior Manlich, father and son, and the son-in-law Karl Neidhard, escaped punishment by flight;[1] the council found themselves compelled to institute a severe ordinance 'on account of the many great failures which had happened for some time past among merchants and other persons who had wasted their own and other people's fortunes in riotous living.'[2] In the year 1580 'countless numbers of people were injured and reduced to poverty' in consequence of suspension of payment by the Augsburg monopolist, Conrad Roth, whose extravagant business undertakings had been promoted by an illustrious chief, the Elector Augustus of Saxony, in spite of an imperial law, renewed in 1577, against monopolists and price-raisers.

In this law it was said: 'Although monopolies and fraudulent, hazardous, and improper forestalling have been forbidden not only in ordinary written laws, but also in public imperial recesses, under pain and punishment, such as loss of all goods and chattels and banishment from the land, nevertheless these said statutes, recesses, and edicts have not hitherto been executed in a full and proper manner, but on the contrary, within a few years numbers of great companies of

[1] v. Stetten, i. 604, 610, 611. Fischer, iv. 34–36, 835–836.
[2] v. Stetten, i. 631.

merchants have been formed, and sundry strange persons, wholesale and retail dealers, have arisen in the empire, who have managed by force and violence to get into their own hands all sorts of wares and mercantile produce, also wine, corn, and other suchlike commodities from the greatest to the least, in order to rule the market and to fix on these goods whatever value they themselves thought fit, or to bind over the buyer or seller not to part with such goods to any but themselves, at the time and in the manner agreed upon.'

All these injurious dealings, buying-up and forestalling, and suchlike dealings, associations and compacts were henceforth to be forbidden; the overreachers were to be subjected to confiscation of their goods and banishment from the country; magistrates who were dilatory in enforcing punishment were to be fined one hundred marks of refined gold; anyone bringing monopolists into notice was to receive a fourth part of the delinquent's forfeited property.

Elector Augustus did not trouble himself about these edicts. According to a contract with King Sebastian of Portugal and his successor, Henry, the Augsburg merchant Roth was to be the sole recipient of all the pepper coming from India to Lisbon and to sell it at a fixed price in the European kingdoms. Augustus constituted himself the business associate of Roth; the latter contemplated, with the help of the electoral moneys, to get the whole pepper trade into his own hands, and then to raise the price of pepper at his own liking; and not of pepper only, but also of cinnamon, cloves, muscat nuts, and all other small spices, which came from the same source and by the same route: by monopolist management of the

whole grocery and drug produce of India, he and his coadjutor hoped to realise untold gain. For the pepper only the net yearly returns were estimated at more than 38,000 gold gulden. A bank was to be founded at Leipzig; a new imperial post service was to connect together all the greater trading towns, which by degrees should be drawn into the spice trade, and a regular shipfaring connection was to be established between Leipzig and Lisbon. In order not to attach his own princely name to a trading business, and thereby bring on himself 'all sorts of annoyance respecting the increased price of pepper,' and to avoid all later reproaches on the score of an enterprise condemned by imperial edicts, the Elector constituted three of his most trusted chamber officials into a 'Thuringian pepper-trading company at Leipzig.' This company had to conclude the contract with Roth & Sons in the Elector's name and at his risk. In 1579 enormous cargoes of pepper came to Leipzig and were partly stored in three electoral vaults on the Pleissenburg. But already the next year, after Portugal had gone over to Spain, and the Spanish Government refused to renew the contract, there followed the crash of the Augsburg merchant-house. Numbers of people were plunged in ruin. Roth himself disappeared suddenly from Augsburg, and put an end to his life by poison. In his first alarm at the disaster the Elector wrote that 'business must be carried on still, even though it should cost a man per month.' Soon afterwards, however, he adopted the line of paying off, as much as possible, the debts of his 'trading company.' To this end he caused an embargo to be laid on all the stores of pepper lying at Hamburg, Antwerp, Frankfort-

on-the-Maine, and Venice to the account of Roth, and on all those on the road to Leipzig, in which proceeding his position as prince of the Empire stood him in good stead. The electoral chamberlain, Hans Harrer, who had been in the company, ended like Roth by suicide.[1]

The alchemist Sebald Schwertzer wanted to incite the Elector Augustus to another lucrative monopolising enterprise. He suggested to him to get all the tin mines into his hands by gradually buying them up: 'the costs,' he said, 'would soon be covered by the tin trade if, for the numerous purchasers, there was only one seller.' All they had to do therefore, since tin was as necessary as daily bread, was to keep back the sale for a length of time and the price would go up enormously. But the electoral chamber councillor Hans von Bernstein, in a memorandum of the year 1583, uttered warnings against such a proceeding, because tin rose and fell rapidly according to the quantity required, and could not always be turned back into money. He appealed to the fact that the Augsburg merchants Meyer, who had some time ago made an attempt to get all the tin into their own hands, had failed for want of purchasers and had lost more than a ton of gold on the undertaking,

[1] J. Falke, 'Des Kurfürsten August portugiesischer Pfefferhandel,' in v. Weber's *Archiv. für die Sächsische Gesch.*, v. 390–410, and *Kurfürst August*, 307–321. Roth also sent the Elector, amongst other things, tobacco plants, from which 'miraculous balsam could be prepared, which would heal all manner of wounds and cuts.' The amount of the bargain concluded between Roth and King Sebastian of Portugal was reckoned as 300,000 gulden. Greiff, 90, n. 104. ** In 1529 the Fuggers had already suffered considerable pecuniary losses in consequence of their share in the Spanish spice trade. Cf. Häbler in the *Zeitschr. des Histor. Ver. für Schwaben*, 19, (1892) 25–45.

besides causing great public injury, so that the mining and tin trade had been at a standstill for years.[1]

Through unfortunate monopolising schemes one of the most famous Augsburg houses, that of the Welsers, failed in 1614, to the extent of 586,578 gold gulden.[2]

'How a whole large district could be injured by extortionate usurious trading and money-dealing' was shown by the bankruptcy, amounting to twenty tons of gold, or two million thalers, of 'Loitz Bros.' at Stettin.

'At this time' (1572), wrote the Pomeranian noble, Joachim von Wedel, who entered details on the subject in his 'Housebook,' Pomerania fell victim to the greatest calamity that could be imagined, and the people began, all too late when the evil was irremediable and the land prostrate on its back, to bethink them and be aware of the fraudulence and cheating of those iniquitous money-gorgers worthy of eternal malediction, the Loitzes. These land pests are of low origin, peasants by birth from the village of Clempin near Stargard; not so very many years ago they came to Stettin as servant or peasant lads, where through marriage they acquired the position of burghers. Business going well with them, they further took to banking, which in time they carried on with emperors, kings, electors and princes. They also began, in addition to their private business, to entertain on a grand scale, living in luxury and splendour, drawing to themselves lordships, convents, castles, towns, villages, and this all out of other people's purses; they were also friends with the noblest of the

[1] Falke, *August*, 298-299. *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 1890, No. 121. *Zweites Morgenblatt, Feuilleton.*

[2] Greiff, 99, n. 169.

land, till at last they attained to so great popularity, credit and esteem that nothing was refused them. All of whom they asked it went bail for them both at home and abroad; whoever had money brought it to their feet; whoever had it not, got it through others, at third or fourth hand, and brought it to the Loitzes; in short, all who could manage to get into business relations with them, thought their fortunes were made and esteemed themselves already rich. And all this came about because no money, however high the rate, was too dear for them. On 100 gulden they would promise 10 or 20 per cent. or more; they created sham capital by adding interest still due to the real capital and paying interest on interest, besides making presents of horses, costly effects, and other gratifications, luxuriously feasting the people from whom they hoped for gain, offering them hospitality, entertaining them well and lavishly, with music and all sorts of fun and merriment, and in the midst of drinking and carousing obtaining pledges to their agreements and bonds. And these money-grabbers and Pomeranian pests had their dealings also with burghers and peasants, overseers and guardians, widows, convents, churches and hospitals, rich and poor, with anyone in short who could raise any money; and they also had their special vultures and falcons, who spied about and searched out every corner, fluttering here and fluttering there, and wherever they smelt money snapping it up and taking it into their net, so that the land was completely cleared and purged of money, and scarcely anything left, so that an honest man in his need could often not manage to borrow 100 gulden. Yea verily, they did not even spare the Lord of the land: through their accomplices holding

out great hopes of profit, he lent the King of Poland a huge sum of money, about 100,000 thalers, which at this very hour is still due. Just as everywhere outside the land, in the Mark, in Mecklenburg, Meissen, Prussia, Holstein and elsewhere, they borrowed quantities of money, for which the Pomeranians were security and by which they suffered great injury and damage, till at last the too highly strung bow snapped, and they had to play the game of bankruptcy, and they treated their creditors all equally, giving each as little as the other. And in the nick of time they escaped from the smoke and took refuge in Prussia, where they had beforehand obtained from the King of Poland the lordship of Tiegenhof, and safe conduct and security; and they left the cart sticking in the mud, so that things were in a woful plight in this country.' After 'warning, abusing, pleading and insisting had all been tried in vain, the matter was at last brought to law in the princes' courts, and then there was such quarrelling and disputing, excepting, protesting and appealing as to matters of debt, that everything else was forgotten. The advocates, procurators, and executors, whom Baldus rightly calls the pest of Europe, had the best of the whole business, for all that was left over fell entirely to their share.'

The country was brought to such misery that an open war, at the end of which land and home return to their rightful owners, had been preferable.

'Many people had been deprived for ever of their houses and possessions, their fiefs and heritages, many families had seen their hereditary lands transferred to others and to strangers, without any hope of ever being restored to their position and dignities. All the heartache, discord and hatred that was thus engendered can

better be imagined than described. In short, Pomerania is now almost turned upside-down and money, property, credit and almost all well-being have been engulfed. It is to be feared that it will be a long and weary time before the country gets over this visitation, or recovers her former condition and credit.' [1]

'We hear almost everywhere,' preached a Dominican in 1581, 'complaints of one disaster after another in commerce and in money-dealing, and among tradespeople, artisans, councillors, distinguished families, counts and noblemen, we see daily what numbers formerly in a good position, in the enjoyment of wealth, prosperity and esteem, become impoverished and ruined, bring wife and children, relations and others to misery, and not unfrequently end in taking their own lives. Whence, however, comes all this misfortune and ruin? In most cases it comes from no other cause than that the unchristian, godless love of gold has seized on everybody and all classes. Whoever has anything to stake, instead of engaging in some honest and strenuous work to support his belongings, shuns all effort and trouble, and thinks to grow rich, and over-rich in a short time, by all sorts of speculation and money-dealing, deposits with merchants and societies, high interest, and usurious contracts. Have not the towns become full of

[1] Wedel's *Hausbuch*, 248–252. See also *Baltische Studien*, xi. 81–91, and the letter of Duke Boguslaw, xiii. of February 27, 1605, in Dähnert, i. 1033. ** Concerning the economic ruin of the Pomeranian towns in the sixteenth century, see also Spahn, *Verfassungs- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte des Herzogtums Pommern*, 163 ff. 'Nevertheless,' writes Spahn (p. 167), 'the towns were not without their share of blame for their economic ruin. The people who inhabited them should have been brought up in hard work in order to be worthy of their natural wealth; for although they thought of nothing but gain, they were, notwithstanding, no trading people, and still less an idealist people.'

such lazy idlers? And the number of such among the nobility is no less great. So long as these people are in luck and are receiving high usurious interest, they parade about like princes, wear extravagantly costly clothes and ornaments, give grand banquets and entertainments, gorge and drink in a manner which is a scandal. But then comes the crash, from numberless causes which cannot all be enumerated, in this thoroughly fraudulent business of trading, money-changing and usury. Those who wanted to grow rich in haste lose their interest with their capital, have squandered what else they possessed, and are reduced to all the misery which I have described. Oh this unholy and accursed money-making and wanting to grow rich without being willing to work and toil, as God ordained that every man should when He said to Adam: "In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread!" That this command is thrown utterly to the wind by all this usurious money-dealing and practice, I regard as the greatest crime and vice of our present days, and the cause from which of necessity, through the just punishment of God, disaster after disaster must ensue.'[1]

John Brockes, oldest burgomaster of Lübeck (†1585), wrote on this subject for the warning and admonition of children: 'In these my days and times there has come about such unheard-of oppression and unchristian, godless taxing and over-reaching in trade and commerce and in money investments as has never been known before in all the world's history: and this usury has

[1] A sermon on the command of God: 'In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread,' preached in the Cathedral at Freiburg by L. Berthold of the Dominican Order (1581).

been practised by leading burgomasters and councillors and citizens, and by members of the nobility from the land of Holstein in their money affairs, so that numbers of burghers through inadvertence, or through pride and pomposity, wanting to cut a fine figure and have grand doings with foreign money, and being forgetful of God, brought God's wrath upon them to their great misfortune, for they devoured and were devoured and took no heed for the future until ruin was at their throats. Moreover, they were to such an extent involved and entangled together in these money matters, had signed for each other and stood security for each other, and so were all impoverished and ruined together, and they defrauded many honourable men who had guaranteed for them, so that those had to pay who could, and those who couldn't, to escape as they could, and numbers, even young people, who had been ruined by going bail, died of broken hearts.' 'My children and heirs,' says Brockes in conclusion, 'I have written this for a mirror and a warning for you all, that you may fear God, maintain yourselves in humility and industrious work, and not cast about for more extensive business until God wills to give it you. For those who think to grow rich in haste and by force generally end in poverty and bankruptcy.'[1]

Sebastian Franck had already written in his Chronicle: 'It has, alas, come to this, that work is looked upon as a disgrace; so much so, that it is scarcely ever now applied to honourable ends, and all parents admonish their children not to work too hard, but rather to feed themselves in idleness on other people's misfortunes.

[1] Brockes, i. 84–85; cf. Falke, *Gesch. des Handels*, ii. 407–408.

What sort of honourable business goes on now amongst Christians and Christian tradespeople, societies, usurers, stockbrokers, money-changers, we indeed perceive all too plainly; it 's all nothing but stockbroking, buying-up, monopolising, and filling the whole country with useless transactions and machinations, to everybody's disadvantage.'[1] Zwingli also complained that 'nobody would any longer earn a maintenance by work.'[2]

The old ecclesiastical canonical teaching on property and its acquirement through honourable work, on the dignity and consecration of work, as well as the old religious laws and interdictions as regards interest and usury,[3] still remained in force and were constantly inculcated afresh; also the imperial legislation, even when it introduced milder laws with regard to loans—and this in full accord with the canonical teaching—only recognised as legal the taking by the lender of a part of the profits made in farming or trading, and protected the borrower against usurious abuse: interest on unproductive loans was not allowed.[4]

How conscientiously orthodox Catholics, towards the end of the sixteenth century, held themselves bound by the Church interdicts against interest is shown, for instance, by the celebrated composer, Orlandus Lassus. For a sum of 4400 gulden lodged by him in the Bavarian ducal treasury, 5 per cent. interest was paid him; but, after the death of Albert V. († 1579), he sent back to Albert's successor, William V., the amount of the interest 'from Christian good zeal and conscience and according

[1] *Chronik*, 270. Cf. Schmoller, *Nationalökonomische Ansichten*, 471 ff.

[2] Schmoller, 482.

[3] See our statements, vol. ii. 90–96.

[4] Endemann, *Studien*, ii. 156, 316–317.

to the godly instruction and careful solicitude of our holy, universal mother, the Church.' [1]

Luther, although in other respects he fiercely opposed the canon law, was decisively on its side in its economic aspects, as is plainly seen from his 'Sermon vom Wucher' (1519), his pamphlet 'Von Kaufhandlung und Wucher' (1524), his 'Vermahnung au die Pfarrherren wider den Wucher zu predigen' (1540). Melanchthon also (in spite of the love he had otherwise for Roman law) and a group of other notable Lutheran theologians, such as Brenz and Bugenhagen, held firmly to the canonical regulations and, after the example of Luther, zealously opposed all receivers of interest as usurers, oppressors and blood-suckers of the needy working people, regardless of the fact that they thereby brought on themselves the hatred of a 'certain class of people.' When the Lutheran superintendent, Philip Caesar, published a pamphlet against usury in 1569, things had come to such a pass, even among the preachers of the Gospel, that he complained bitterly as follows: 'The preachers who defend usury "inveigh largely" against the opposite teaching, against the preachers who teach thus, and against the rulers who give employment to such preachers. We preachers who declaim against taking interest on money stir up against ourselves the hatred of the whole world. The blame of this is in great measure yours, you, our brethren in office, who constitute yourselves champions of the usurer, or even practise usury yourselves. It is to be lamented that not ordinary persons only, but even professors of theology of note, defile themselves with such flagrant

[1] v. Hormayr, *Taschenbuch*, new series, 22, 264.

vices, and in their blindness do not scruple to defend this abominable usury, in opposition to the express teaching of Holy Scripture and the clear judgment of the better portion of the Church at all times.'[1] The Mansfeld, later on Brandenburg-Kulmbach councillor, George Lauterbecken, in his 'Regentenbuch,' fell foul of Martin Bucer because he was willing 'to allow Christians out of 100 gulden to take one every month, that is 12 gulden yearly.' 'What,' said he, 'has become of the book which Dr. Luther, of blessed memory, wrote to the pastors about usurers, admonishing them with great earnestness to preach against avarice and usury, so that they might not be partakers of the sins of usurers, but might rather let the latter die like wild beasts, not administering the sacraments to them nor admitting them into the Christian community? Nobody thinks any more about it. Where in all these lands, although we pretend to be evangelical, is anyone repulsed from the Sacrament of the Altar on account of usury? Where does anyone, according to the ordinance of the Church, forbid usurers to make wills and testaments? Where do we ever see one of the set buried in the flaying-place—one even who has been all his life the very worst of usurers, and whom the children in the street have known as such?'

[1] Ph. Caesar: 'Universa propemodum doctrina de usura, testimoniis Sacrosanctae Scripturae et Doctorum purioris Ecclesiae a tempore Apostolorum ad hanc nostram aetatem fundata, stabilita et confirmata, quae hoc postremo mundi tempore invalescentis prorsus et dominantis Avaritiae ab omnium ordinum hominibus utiliter legi potest' (Basileae [1569]), pp. 72, 74, 92. Concerning the prescripts of Luther, Melanchthon, Bugenhagen and so forth, 26 sqq., 50–52, 63 sqq. Caesar at p. 15 even appeals to St. Bridget against the usurers. See also K. Köhler, *Luther und die Juristen* (Gotha, 1873), pp. 59 ff., 119, 121.

'Yea, verily, they grow so proud and haughty that they dare defy the preachers: "Let them rail at us from the pulpits for being usurers," say they, "we'll read them a lesson;" thus they so intimidate the poor parsons that these are forced, some of them, to keep silence; the others see that they can do little to mend matters, and so let things go, for they can get neither help nor support from the rulers, who meanwhile go on themselves practising the usury which they ought to punish.'[1]

In a trial at law which Martin Bucer instituted in 1538 against the anabaptist, Jorg Schnabel, the latter said: 'It was given out that the new Church was better than the Popish Church; but he had separated himself from it because the practice of usury was double as great in it as in the old Church. Under the papacy it used not to happen that the poor were driven from house and home, but now they were thus driven out.' On 20 gulden two to three were taken as interest.[2]

The Flacian theologian, Joachim Magdeburgius, who was guided by Luther's precepts, complained especially of the practice of usury which had obtained among the Lutheran nobility. 'The squires,' he said, 'loan to their own peasants a malter of corn at 18 or 20 groschen the bushel when its market value is only 10 or 12 groschen. Thus the poor man has already lost half a malter on every malter before he puts the corn in the sack, and he must then pay the squire back the next year at the most disadvantageous time, at Martinmas that is, when all the rents, taxes, duties and tithes are due, and when corn is cheapest, he must hand over his corn all in a lump at great loss and damage,

[1] Quoted by Scherer, *Drey underschiedliche Predigten*, 57–58.

[2] Niedner's *Zeitschrift für histor. Theologie*, xxviii. 628, 632.

and give back the bushel at the rate of 10 or 12 groschen, though very soon after he might have sold it for 18 or 20 groschen. The poor man thus loses another half-malter, and so gives 2 malters for 1; that is, 100 per cent. is taken from him in usury; and usury of this sort is so common in Thuringia that no other trade is more so.'[1]

Not merchants only, but also nobles, the Elector Augustus complained on November 5, 1569, had hitherto 'made great usurious transactions' at the Leipzig fairs, frequently with those who were constrained by necessity to borrow money, 'exacting on 100 gulden a yearly interest of 15, 20, 30, 40 and even more gulden.'[2]

In the Dithmarschen district usury had grown to such extremes in 1541, that in six months interest was exacted to the amount of 13*s.* on half a gulden, and 20 gulden on 20 gulden (100 per cent.). In 1585 Duke Adolf of Schleswig-Holstein issued a penal edict against the 'abominable usury and fleecing' which was practised without scruple in all places in buying corn, in borrowing and other business transactions. 'The usurers,' he wrote, 'in a short space of time take two, three and more pfennig on one, and so the simple poor are frightfully drained from day to day, and with wife and children brought to starvation.' Cases of distraint increased to such an extent that within a short space of time many houses changed hands four, five, and even nine or ten times.[3]

[1] Scherer, *Drey underschiedliche Predigten*, 54.

[2] *Codex Augusteus*, i. 1046–1047; cf. also 1055–1059, the renewed usury laws of the years 1583 and 1609.

[3] Neocorus, ii. 141, 293, 382.

Duke Barnim of Pomerania-Stettin said in a Provincial Diet Recess of January 10, 1566: 'The practice of usury is gaining ground inordinately in our land, so that many people have the audacity to take 6, 8, 10 and even 12 florins on 100, whilst others, by exacting rack rents and compound interest, drain the country of its cash which then they use for usury on a greater scale in other lands.'

'Things have come to such a pass,' he complained in September of the same year, 'that in time of need, throughout the whole land, not even 2000–3000 gulden can be raised at a reasonable rate of interest.'[1] In a Pomeranian peasant ordinance of 1616 it says: 'From one gulden four groschen interest is taken yearly, from one bushel of corn a quarter of a bushel.'[2]

In other districts similar, if not worse, instances occurred.[3]

'The accursed people,' wrote the Marburg judicial procurator, Sauwr, in 1593, 'have now another way of carrying on usury; they do not take money for money but they lend money on corn, meadows and acres, by which means they get at least 15 or 20 gulden

[1] Dähnert, i. 496, 506.

[2] *Ibid.* iii. 837.

[3] ** 'I know one person,' says Erasmus Sarcerius (1555), 'who exacts for a loan of 8 fl., 3 fl. interest, i.e. 37½ per cent.; another who takes 18 bushels of corn on 24 fl., and a third 5 talers for 30.' See Neumeister, 'Sittliche Zustände im Mansfeldischen,' in the *Zeitschr. des Harzvereins*, xx. 525, note. In Nuremberg, especially in the epoch when the financial resources of the republic were nearly exhausted, the curse of usury grew in the most luxuriant manner. Hence the numerous but fruitless mandates and efforts for cutting down the evil at the roots. Equally futile were earnest consultations at council boards, as in 1537 and 1565: 'For although papal law forbade usury, the imperial legislation took the opposite line and allowed a certain amount of usury to both Christians and Jews.' Knapp, *Das alte Nürnberger Kriminalrecht*, p. 250.

per cent. yearly. And in order that the roguery shall not be discovered, they draw up a written statement, in which it is made out that distraint is limited to 5 per cent. for the creditor.'[1] The inspectors of the Circle Schlüchtern in the county Hanau-Münzenberg reported in 1602 that 'usury was so common that on a loan of 20 gulden a cartload of hay was exacted as interest.'[2]

John Mathesius described fourteen different methods of practising usury which were in vogue, amongst others: 'They either take 10 or 20 gulden a year on 100 gulden, or 1 groschen a week, or in Jewish fashion 46 groschen a year on 100, without the interest on arrears, or else they lend a handicraftsman 20 gulden, for which he is expected to do all the work in the usurer's house.'[3] Zacharias Poleus aired this grievance in a tragedy in which he makes the peasants complain that besides paying 12 per cent. on loans, they have to make presents as well.[4] The Meissen superintendent Gregory Strigenicius wrote in 1598: 'A yearly percentage of 54 thalers and 4 groschen is very often taken. The imperial laws allow 5 per cent., thus usurers of this sort exact ten times as much as is legal, and still pretend to be good Christians.'[5]

The preacher Bartholomew Ringwalt was able to report that on 80 thalers as much as 250 thalers had actually been taken.[6]

In a pamphlet addressed to 'the great money-

[1] Sauwr, Preface Bl. B$^2$.

[2] *Zeitschrift des Vereins für hessische Geschichte und Landeskunde*, New Series, v. 192, 201.

[3] *Postilla prophetica*, 222$^b$.

[4] Palm, *Beiträge* 121.

[5] Diluvium, 186.

[6] *Die lautere Wahrheit*, 31.

usurers, the hell-juries, the hell-hounds and wolves, &c.,' the author exclaims: 'We ought to hold usurers in abhorrence; it would be no wonder if we should spit on them in the road. The usurer is rightly treated as a murderer, robber, bandit, vagabond, devil's associate, we ought indeed rather to deal, eat, drink, associate with a Turk or a heathen than with a great usurer; they ought, also, not to be buried with other Christians; it is not too much disgrace for them to be buried in the flaying-place.' [1]

How matters stood in Catholic districts with the practice of usury and with the contempt of Church laws and commands, is shown by numerous utterances of the Jesuit George Scherer. 'Usurious and unlawful contracts,' so he preached, 'have to such an extent gained the upper hand, that neither help nor counsel serve any longer against them.[2] We preachers are too

[1] *Der Wucherer Messkram und Jarmarkt* (1544), Bl. K4[b]–L. L[3]. Cf. *Spiegel des Geitz . . . wider die grewlichen Finantzereien*, &c. (written in rhyme by a simple layman), Magdeburg, 1586. ** 'Usury,' wrote George Engelhart Löhneiss (p. 304), 'has gained head to such an extent that even great and distinguished people are infected with this scandalous vice, and we are expected to honour and esteem these usurers more than other reputable people; for princes and lords are their dupes, taken captive with such usurious gold that they cannot choose but do what is exacted of them. Likewise the land and the people are their Mancipia or bond-servants, whom they drain and ruin with their unchristian usury, pretending all the time to be themselves Christians. When a poor circumcised Jew takes a penny interest per week from a gulden, everybody cries out murderer. But when an uncircumcised Christian Jew takes from a gulden as much as a dreier or a kreuzer, or even a groschen, this forsooth must not be called Jewish usury. Item, the poor Jew's small, trivial usury sticks in everybody's throat; they all cry out at him and will have him turned out; but when the Christian Jew takes his 10, 12, 15 or more per cent. and turns his money over several times in the year, nobody thinks of driving him out.'

[2] Scherer, *Postille*, 681[b].

weak against this usury; we may cry out and write against it as long as we will, they care not a jot, but go on just the same as ever. But such disobedience should not make the preacher weary of lifting his voice like a trumpet unceasingly against this Mammon, so that he should not, by his silence, constitute himself a participator in the sins of others. Whether preaching against usury bears fruit or not, the preacher has at any rate fulfilled the duty of his office and saved his own soul.' 'Like a sin-flood usury has overwhelmed the whole world.' 'Through this accursed usury we rob our neighbour of house and home and all that he has; the usurer has a wonderful knack of doing this! Many a one lends 1000 gulden, but only pays 500 in cash, and pays this in money of such sort that the borrower must lose upon it; the other 500 he pays back in damaged wares, priced at the highest, in rotten cloth, in unsound credit notes, in glutinous wine, in limping horses, and so forth; in this way he makes up the full sum and sticks on to it 8 per cent. profit. Is not this an unchristian and devilish kind of usury?' 'Common thieves are not at all times employed in stealing, but only occasionally at night-time or else in a secret hidden manner; they, moreover, ashamed of their robberies, go about with downcast eyes, and dare not look anyone cheerfully in the face; but the usurer-thieves rob and steal both by day and by night, their hoards increase every hour and they take less rest than a weathercock. They do it all openly and without any shame and consort daily with great princes and lords, sit in grand offices and wear golden chains. Yea, verily, these big thieves often condemn the small ones to be hung, just as if only common stealing was

forbidden and not much more open robbery and usury.' By stern imperial laws the Jews had been forbidden the practice of usury, 'but the Christians of the present day far outstrip the Jews in putting the knife on Christian throats: those Jews who, years ago, were bound to wear yellow rings on their clothes.' [1]

But 'with the Christians,' says another Catholic preacher in 1585, 'as many worldly wiseacres say, we must deal very softly when it is a question of usurers and usurious contracts and investments; it's only the Jews that we must abuse, trample under foot, spit on as enemies of God and man. With your leave, my good sir and Christian usurer, I hold that baptised Jews deserve far worse and dire punishment than the unbaptised ones, and that the godless vice of usury, which has passed from the Jews to the Christians, is practised more zealously by the latter than by the former.'

'By this,' the preacher goes on, 'I do not mean in any way to exonerate the usurious Jews who will not work, but are only intent in scratching together immoderate gains by the most iniquitous ways; for these men diabolically fleece the poor, inexperienced, necessitous Christian people, artisans and peasants, and understand how in an equally masterly way to draw into their nets the frivolous portion of the higher classes, bent only on money-making, display, and extravagant spending. The universal complaint of usury and other injurious dealings of the Jews is well-founded, no less than is the outcry against careless and suspicious high lords and rulers, who look on calmly at the despoiling

[1] *Drey underschiedliche Predigten*, 22, 27, 31-33, 44-45, 47.

of the people by the Jews, as though it were all lawful, and let it go unpunished, or actually row in the same boat as the Jews.'

'But that the Jews should be driven out, as many wish, I consider unnecessary. If they could be brought to conform to the laws of the empire, that is to work and earn their bread by honest trades, and to carry on at the public free fairs and yearly markets upright commerce and dealings such as the laws of the empire do not forbid, and if they would be content with the interest allowed them by the empire—5 per cent. and no more—we might suffer them to dwell among the Christians as a people dispersed by the judgment of God. But who will see to it that all this is carried out? So little supervision has there been hitherto that the Jews are lazier miscreants at the present day than ever before, they take interest up to 40, 60, 80, and even more, per cent., and have the audacity to do things which were strictly forbidden by Charles V. and the Imperial Estates in the Recess at Augsburg in 1530, and again most emphatically in the years 1548 and 1577, in the following words: "Whereas in some places in the empire of the German nation the Jews carry on usury, and not only borrow on heavy bonds, securities and special mortgages, but also lend money on stolen goods and through such practices oppress and impoverish the poor, needy and unwary people more than anyone can calculate; we herewith do decree, ordain and insist that by nobody in the Holy Empire shall Jews who practise usury be housed, fed or dealt with, that also in this empire these same Jews shall have neither protection, nor safe conduct, and that in no courts of justice shall claims for their usurious profits be upheld.

Any people who tolerate Jews in their midst must control them in such manner as to ensure their abstaining from usury and usurious dealing, and earning their livelihood by suitable labour and handicraft, just as all rulers do with their own subjects for the common good." Thus the laws prescribed. Nevertheless what we see before our eyes and learn from daily experience is exactly the opposite, and hence arises the inveterate hatred of the people towards the Jews, and their desire to see them ruthlessly driven out of all lands.' [1]

Thus, for instance, the Bavarian Provincial Ordinance of 1553 decreed that ' Jews were no longer to be allowed to dwell or to carry on any dealings in the principality of Bavaria; no subject was to enter into any contract or business with a Jew either within or without the country: if any subjects contracted debts to Jews through buying, lending or selling, the debts would fall to the exchequer.' [2]

In the Tyrol, where frequent complaints were also uttered that the poor subjects were indebted to the Jews for many thousands of gulden, the Jews were, it

[1] A useful and well-grounded sermon and admonition against the avarice and usury of the present world, compiled from the Holy Scriptures and Catholic teaching by William Sartorius, chaplain at Ingolstadt (1585), pp. 5, 8, 9. The imperial laws on Jewish usury of the years 1530, 1548, 1551, 1577 in the new collection of the Imperial Recess, ii. 342, No. 27; 599, No. 21; 622, §§ 78–79; and iii. 383–390, No. 20. ** The town of Ehingen received in 1559 the privilege to forbid any Jew from buying land or lending money upon it. Charles V. had already in 1548 conferred a similar privilege on the manorial lord of the lordships of Ehingen, Schelklingen, and Berg, Conrad von Bemelberg. According to this writ no burghers were to have any dealings with Jews, or to borrow from them: if they did the borrowed money was to be forfeited. Schmid in the *Histor.-Jahrb.*, xvii. 91.

[2] *Bayerische Landesordnung*, fol. 167, 169.

is true, driven out of certain localities, but to a general expulsion of the race Archduke Ferdinand II. and his government would not agree. Supposing such a measure were adopted, said the Government in 1570, it would be necessary for the Jews, before their departure, to be repaid what was owing to them by the subjects, and this would be impossible; besides which the banished people would very soon again effect their return, and if they were to settle down in the neighbouring territories of foreign lords they might cause even greater evil. If only the Jews, it had been said already in an earlier manifesto of the Government of 1558, would work like other people, desist from their vilifications of the Christian religion, and abstain from usury, there would be no objection to their being tolerated in the country. An attempt was made to protect the subjects in some measure against 'usurious contracts' by intensifying the regulations against Jewish usury by compelling the Jews to settle their loan affairs before the magistrates and forbidding them to sell their notes of hand to Christians.

'Usurious contracts,' however, were not concluded by Jews only. When Sigmund of Welsberg was required to send the Jews out of his lordship, Telvana in South Tyrol, he answered: 'Certainly the Jews take from 20–40 per cent., but the Christians also ask 20 per cent. and many more people are driven out of house and home by them than by the Jews; for none but movable goods are pledged to the Jews, whereas the Christians are also assessed on their houses and property and that for very trifling debts.' In Bregenz 20–30 per cent. was frequently exacted; one merchant in Rattenberg in the year

1584 was paid 4 gulden interest a week on 100 gulden.[1]

In the archbishopric of Mayence, the Archbishop Sebastian von Heusenstamm (1545–1555) on the strength of the imperial legislation had ordered all the Jews out of his diocese and had strictly charged them and his subjects on pain of severe penalty to abstain in future from buying, lending, and so forth by usurious contracts; however, 'the unattached Jews living under alien authorities,' so wrote Archbishop Daniel Brendel, of Homburg, in 1558, 'troubled themselves no whit about this injunction, but continued to lead the poor simple subjects into irrevocable ruin.' The archbishop renewed the orders; renewed them again in 1577, in 1579 ordered all the Jews to be driven out of the Rheingau, but all these 'strenuous measures' were just as futile as those of Archbishop Wolfgang von Dalberg decreed in 1583 'under pain of severe punishment.' In 1605 the interest exacted by the Jews rose to the height of 20–25 per cent., and their debtors were over and above this expected to 'be ready with honorariums.'[2]

Similar conditions were found to prevail in Protestant districts, and among the Protestants, indeed, the 'ingrained hatred of the people for the Jews was most loudly voiced, a hatred chiefly fostered by a variety of publications in which the Protestants derided the Jews and not infrequently attributed to them the worst of crimes, poisoning fountains, especially ritual murders.[3]

[1] Hirn, i. 424–425, 444.

[2] Fuller details are given by K. A. Schaab, *Diplomatische Geschichte der Juden zu Mainz und dessen Umgebung* (Mainz, 1855), p. 177 ff.

[3] See L. Geiger, 'Die Juden und die deutsche Literatur,' in the *Zeitschr. für die Geschichte der Juden in Deutschland*, vol. ii. 297–374. John Fischart, also, in 1575, directed a disgusting satirical poem against

'What things are coming to in Germany no one knows,' said the Lutheran preacher, Jodokus Ehrhardt, in 1558, 'but one hears everywhere, nowadays, nothing but complaints of inordinate sins and vices of all sorts, of ruin of trade and commerce, of impoverishment on the one hand and luxury and extravagance on the other, till the last groschen has flown from the pocket, but not a single complaint is so common, amongst high and low, theologians, preachers, scholars, and indeed all classes of society, as that concerning the usury of the Jews, those blasphemers of God and enemies of Christ, those stinking, gnawing leeches who, wherever they creep in, suck the life-blood of the Christians and drive them out of house and home into beggary. Whatever measures are taken against these most harmful worms and blood-suckers are all fruitless. Therefore it would be well if in all places they were proceeded with as Father Luther advised and enjoined when, amongst other things, he wrote: "Let their synagogues and schools be set on fire, and let who can throw brimstone and pitch into the flames; if anyone could throw in fire from hell it would be good indeed; and whatever will not burn let it be heaped over with earth and kept covered up that no human being may see a stone or a brick of it to all eternity. Likewise let their houses be pulled down

the Jews. See our remarks, vol. xi. 374 ff. See similar vehement diatribes against the Jews in Olorinus Variscus (preacher John Sommer of Zwickau), *Geldtklage*, 415–446. 'It is very instructive,' says Geiger, 369, 'to note how in the attitude of the writers and the nation towards the Jews, the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries differed from each other. Hatred enough existed in the first of these two centuries; of outbursts of hatred there was no lack; nevertheless the general tone is milder.' Geiger refers especially in proof of this to the utterances of Trithemius, quoted by us in vol. ii. 91, 97, 101 f.

and destroyed, and let them all squat under sheds or tents like the gypsies, that they may learn that they are not lords in our land. Further, the Jews must be deprived of all right of thoroughfare in the streets, for they have nothing to do in this country. If the lords and the princes do not interdict such usurers free passage of the streets by law, they may gather together in a mob, for they will learn out of my book what the Jews are and how we ought to deal with them, having no regard to the safety of their persons. They must be forbidden usury of every kind, and all their ready money and their treasures in silver and gold must be taken from them, and put aside to be preserved, for all that they possess they have stolen from us by usury, which is the only way they have of getting a livelihood. I hear it said that the Jews give large sums of money and are thus useful to the lordships. Yes, indeed, but out of whose pockets do they give these sums? Not out of their own, but out of those of the lordships and the subjects, whom they rob and plunder by usury. And so it comes to this, that the lordships take from the subjects what the Jews give them: i.e. the subjects must let themselves be fleeced for the Jews in order that the latter may be able to remain in the country, and be free to lie, cheat, curse and thieve. How those villainous Jews must laugh in their sleeves to see how disgracefully we let ourselves be fooled by them! They all the time growing rich on our sweat and blood, whilst we are poor and drained to the dregs. They fleece us to the bones, the lazy rascals and idle curmudgeons; they eat, drink and have good times in our houses, and in return they curse our Lord Christ, our churches, our princes, and all of us; threaten us with and wish us death and all disaster

without ceasing. God's wrath is so great against them, that mercy and pity only make them worse and worse, while severity makes them very little better, therefore again I say, away with them." Such were the true and wise injunctions which the God-enlightened Father Luther gave, and things would have been far better and more Christian in German lands if his advice had been followed. But the Jews and the Jews' friends, with their monies and their presents and their loans to princes and lords in their necessity, have known how to evade all difficulties and turn everything to their own advantage, so that we Christians are still continuously drained and plundered by the Jews and their usury, and are now little better than servants and slaves to them, simply because they were not treated as Luther advised, who had such fatherly intentions towards us Germans. And even now, in order that at last things may grow better, every prince and ruler ought to take to heart and follow Luther's advice and admonition.'[1]

[1] Ehrhardt, Bl. A²—B. Luther's *Bedencken und Vermahnungen* enjoyed great esteem among the Protestant theologians. Lucas Osiander the Elder, in 1598, sent Luther's *Shemhamphoras* to Duke Frederick of Würtemberg, in support of his petition for the expulsion of all Jews from the land. (Moser's *Patriot. Archiv.*, ix. 266.) With the same object in view, the theological faculty at Giessen, in 1612, had Luther's utterances reprinted. (*Theolog. Bedencken*, 8–14.) When in 1538 the Jew question was eagerly discussed in Hessian government circles, the Landgrave Philip appealed to his court theologians for advice. Bucer drew up a memorandum which was signed at Cassel, in 1539, by himself and six Hessian preachers. In this memorandum (printed in Bucer's pamphlet, *Von den Juden*, [Strasburg, 1539]) the question is discussed from a religious and an economic point of view. There could only be one true religion, it was argued, and therefore 'contradictory and false religions must be most severely punished and in no way tolerated. Kings, princes and towns could not be condemned for not tolerating Jews in their midst and for finally driving them out.' If, however, any rulers wished to show the Jews tolerance, 'they must subject them to various

In like strain spoke also the Hessian Superintendent, George Nigrinus, in 1570: 'God the Lord had decreed that the Jews should be "a bye-word and a mockery among all nations." Thence it followed undeniably that

restrictions; for instance, the authorities must most firmly insist that the Jews shall not erect any fresh synagogues.' In economic respects Bucer declares that every ruler is bound to see to it: 'I.—That the Jews shall nowhere lend money to anyone on usury. II.—That all traffic in old goods, and all mercantile dealings shall be forbidden them. For so long as they consider that they have the right to defraud us and to get unlawful possession of what belongs to us, as though according to the meaning of their law, they were to be our lords and we their servants, they will always contrive to get the better of Christians in any business dealings they may have with them. III.—Has not the Lord uttered this threat against the Jews (Deut. 28, v. 43, 44), "The stranger that is within thee shall get above thee very high; and thou shalt come down very low. He shall lend to thee, and thou shalt not lend to him; he shall be the head and thou shalt be the tail"? This divine threat our rulers must fulfil against the Jews, and not set themselves up to be more merciful than Mercy itself, God the Lord, although it is indeed no mercifulness but rather unmercifulness to spare the wolves to the injury of the sheep, the poor, pious Christians. They must, therefore, in such wise treat the Jews, according to God's righteous and merciful judgment, that they may not be above but below the Christians, that they may be the tail and not the head. For the Jews, in their unbelief and scorn of Christ, together with the blood of the Lord, of his beloved apostles and of so many martyrs, which by their own wish and by the just judgment of God still clings to them, ought to be made to suffer severely under godly rulers. Now, however, they are able to boast (and it is not a boast, but a fact) that they are our lords and we their servitors, and not the other way round as God has decreed. For through their advantageous lending, buying and selling they get everything away from us and ours, while they themselves parade in idleness and arrogance with the sweat of our people, and of almost the poorest among them. They comport themselves also in such a manner that neither they nor their children will do any domestic service for us, though often enough our people become their servants; for they can always find among our people some who will light their fires, cook, scrub, and do other work for them on their Sabbath. And if in any places they should still be allowed to carry on usury, and only the selling old goods and trading should be forbidden them, seeing how clever and cunning they are, how unscrupulous and unconscientious in forestalling and outwitting us, thinking verily that they are doing God a

it was not right to encourage and protect them in such a way that they could carry on unhindered all their abominable usury, fleecing and secondhand-dealing, living idle lives in luxury and arrogance on the sweat of

service, they will without a shadow of doubt so manage that they will soon be above us and not below us, the head and not the tail. Therefore no Christian rulers, to whom religion and good policy are dear, must allow these enemies of Christ, the Jews, to carry on any mercantile business or to trade in old goods. IV.—Furthermore they must not even throw open to them those more respectable and profitable handicrafts in which the value of the work depends on the probity and skill of the worker, but must keep them down to the very lowest and least profitable kinds of work, such as mining, digging, making ramparts, chopping wood and stone, burning chalk, sweeping chimneys, cleaning out drains, flaying, butchering, and so forth. For, as has already been said, the curse has been laid on them by the merciful Lord God, that with the nations among whom they dwell they shall be the lowest and the tail, and treated with the greatest hardship.' At the end of this memorandum the preachers wrote as follows: 'We the undersigned preachers unanimously recognise this statement as clear in itself, as truly Christian, and in accordance with Divine Writ; thus we are all of one mind on the question of law. But, as to the question of fact, whether it is advisable to tolerate the Jews any longer in the principality of Hesse, the preachers who live in the country cannot feel any confidence that the conditions and regulations herewith laid down from divine and imperial laws will be fulfilled; contrariwise, in view of all the circumstances of the government and also of the Jews' cunning bribes and intrigues, they are compelled to fear that if the Jews are retained here any longer it will bring certain peril to religion and to the sustenance of the poor, and insure profit to no one. Accordingly we recognise and conclude that it would be better and more profitable, as matters now stand in the principality, not to tolerate the Jews any longer.' The Landgrave, meanwhile, showed himself more lenient towards the Jews than his court theologians. He issued a manifesto to the officials of Cassel, in which the advice of the preachers was disregarded. A few days later the princely manifesto, as well as the theologians' memorandum, found its way into the hands of the Jews, who were naturally infuriated with the intolerant preachers. In order to pay off the latter they forthwith published their memorandum with the Landgrave's answer; they also extolled the tolerance of the Catholic Church as opposed to the intolerance of the evangelical parsons. Paulus, *Die Judenfrage und die hessischen Prediger in der Reformationszeit. Katholik*, 1891, i. 317-324.

the poor, yea, verily, of the poorest of the Christians. They ought, according to God's judgment and ordinance, which he laid on them as a special punishment, to be kept to service and manual labour, so that they might be reminded of their abominable sins. They complain bitterly that they are poor, captive people, and utter this complaint daily in their prayers, as though they were hindered by Christ from returning to their own land. But whatever devil has brought them into this land, let him take them out of it again. All the roads are open to them; who keeps them back? How often have they not been driven out by force, and yet we cannot get rid of them. Would God that all rulers would imitate God's wrath and expel them by force from the land, or else keep them in subjection and service as they themselves kept the Gibeonites and other peoples.' If the rulers will not drive them out with their odious usury, 'it would be better to allot them a desert place to themselves, a village or a hamlet where they might build and work for their living like other people; this would be far better than keeping them here and there amongst our poor people to suck their life-blood. If they dwelt alone and were obliged to support themselves by their own labour they would have to forego a great deal of self-gratification, like other peasants, and would not be able to ride the high horse as if they were nobles.'[1]

The theological faculty at Giessen, which republished this memorandum in 1612, also invoked the wrath of God on all those who befriended the Jews. 'It is well known,' they said, 'that in human and divine justice alike the Jews are bound to render all service, obedience

[1] *Theolog. Bedencken*, 21–27; cf. Goedeke, *Grundriss*, ii. 506, No. 2, Geiger, 338–339, in the article quoted above, p. 48, n. 3.

and submissiveness to the Christians as the rightful bond-servants and vassals of the latter, and it is therefore contrary to divine and worldly justice that a Jew should in any way whatever hold his head above a Christian, or in the least degree show the latter scorn or cause him annoyance. It cannot therefore but be a very great scandal for a Christian to be constrained and coerced on account of a Jew, especially for the sake of vile, filthy, usurious lucre, and the rulers ought rather to execute divine and human justice against the Jews.' The Jews had scandalously abused the privileges accorded them by the imperial laws: 'they ought not to be allowed to maintain their synagogues, they must be kept to all sorts of menial work, and they must be taught a little manners, so that they might learn that they were not lords but bond-servants.' 'Above all, the Jews must be debarred from their accursed usury; for it is undeniable that by it they transform themselves into rich gentlemen, while the Christians on the other hand are kept down by them and reduced to direst poverty, &c., &c. No, no, my good friends, the laudable emperors have not given you any freedom to practise your insolent villainies, your poisoning, your overweening, inhuman mercilessness, injustice and blood-sucking against the Christians.'[1]

The court preacher, Lucas Osiander, had spoken no less strongly in 1598. 'The Jews,' he said, 'are an accursed race, rejected and anathematised by God; they are the devil's bond-servants in body and in soul.' 'Wherever they install themselves in a country they ruin the poor subjects by their usury and other such dealings, and bring them to beggary. When they

[1] *Theolog. Bedencken*, 2–8.

give bargains to the people from whom they expect to benefit, and even make them presents, it is all done at the expense of the poor subjects, whom they fleece unmercifully, and whosoever is led by them does not soon "find himself on a green branch again." They have, for instance, a good place at the Rottweil court of justice, whose heavy sentences of ban and exile reduce their debtors to utter ruin.'

Accordingly he admonished Duke Frederick of Würtemberg that 'if a ruler wished to see his poor subjects grow poorer and poorer and finally lose all their goods and chattels, he had only to consent to this accursed race settling in his territory.' Christian evangelical lords, he said, who had been well reformed, 'had driven out the Jews and never let them come back again.'[1]

The preacher Eberlin of Günzburg, in his funeral sermon on Count George II. of Wertheim (†1530), praised this prince because 'he had rescued his subjects from the great land plague of Jewish usury, by which so many people were ruined and driven to beggary.'[2]

The Calvinist Elector Frederick III. of the Palatinate would also not tolerate Jews in his dominion, and directed his successors, in his will, to keep them for ever out of the Palatinate, not only because they were 'notorious despoilers of the poor subjects, land plagues, traitors and dangerous practitioners,' but also, which was the worst part of it, because 'they were blasphemers of God and avowed enemies of our Redeemer, and of all those who honoured and confessed His name.'[3] 'But in spite of banishment and prohibition

[1] Moser, *Patriotisches Archiv*, ix. 257–266.

[2] Cf. A. Kaufmann in the *Archiv des histor. Vereins für Unterfranken und Aschaffenburg*, xx. 9–10.

[3] Kluckhohn, *Friedrich der Fromme*, 387.

of trading with Christians, the Jews,' said the revised Palatine provincial ordinance of 1599, 'continue as before to practise usury to the injury of the inhabitants.'[1]

In Würtemberg Duke Ulrich had already, in 1536, issued a command for the expulsion of the Jews, 'those gnawing, mischievous worms'; [2] but all the same they forced their way back again, so that Duke Christopher endeavoured to prevail on the Imperial Estates to expel them once for all from the whole empire.[3] Simultaneously with Osiander, in 1598, the Würtemberg Provincial Estates petitioned the patron of the Jews, Duke Frederick, to free them from those 'gnawing worms.'[4]

Osiander considered the Jews all the more dangerous because they were magicians, and as such associates and servants of the devil.[5]

'It is precisely through these magic arts of theirs,' said the preacher Jodokus Ehrhardt to his congregation, 'that the Jews have so much luck with their usury and are able to bring the common people, the princes, and the great lords, all alike into their nets; for the devil helps them as his faithful lovers, servants and associates, till they have bewitched the Christians and got them into their power with their usury and other practices.'[6]

Henry Schröder of Weissenburg had even fuller details to give about them. 'The Jews,' he declared in 1613, 'are the agents of the devil.' 'These blasphemers and enemies of Christian blood have among their Rabbis some who can compel the devil to bring

[1] Neumann, *Gesch. des Wuchers*, 334. [2] Reyscher, xii. 112.
[3] Sattler, *Herzoge von Württemberg*, iv. 132.
[4] Moser, *Patriotisches Archiv*, ix. 274–286.
[5] In the passage quoted above, note 1, p. 56. [6] Ehrhardt, Bl. B².

them a little wooden or stone image, and whoever wears this image on his neck, to him no ruler can refuse a request, or show any disfavour. By this means they get to know who has money and where money is to be raised. So that at all times they are the people who find the cash for lords and princes. Thus they gain favour in court; one such princely digger for devil's hoards may have about him a thousand Jews, all intent upon fleecing men, filing coins, forging seals. And all this goes on unpunished; it is the work of the necromancer, the devil who is their lord protector. With the help of the devil they spirit away all our good luck when we have any dealings with them; they bewitch those who borrow from them so that they are unable to pay back, till the interest has grown larger than the sum borrowed.'[1] 'But however much,' says Jodokus Ehrhardt, 'people may attribute to the magic arts of the Jews, if they want to know for what reasons, in spite of their fleecing of the people, they obtain so much favour and promotion with princes, counts and nobles, let me tell them that the chief of these reasons is that these great lords are deeply in debt to the Jews, and that without their help they could not hold their heads above water: this is universally known; I abstain, out of respect for the kings and princes, from mentioning, as I could, many by name among whom it is well known that this sort of thing is lamentably common.' 'And consequently in the territories of these rulers the Jews can grub and burrow, and drain and cheat the poor subjects as much as they like.'[2]

[1] Scheible, *Schaltjahr*, v. 216, 219-220.

[2] Ehrhardt, Bl. B³.

Detailed information comes to us from many quarters.

Thus, for instance, Melchior of Ossa, at the close of the Middle Ages *Statthalter* to Count William of Henneberg, reports: 'The little country is full of Jews who cruelly and grievously oppress the poor subjects. They enjoy more protection and favour and more privileged access to the Count William than do the councillors or honourable and distinguished personages.' All in vain did Ossa represent to the Count that 'Rulers were bound to protect their subjects against ruin, and that he would have a heavy reckoning with God for having countenanced the Jews in practising such excessive usury: one Jew alone at Untermaasfeld, near the fortress of Henneberg, had more than 500 peasants under his thumb who were obliged to pay him usurious interest.' Worse things still were told of the Jews of Meiningen and Schleusingen; uninvited they dared present themselves in the Count's bedchamber, and, a thing unheard of in the empire, they were allowed to purchase hereditary property. In vain also, at Ossa's request, did the Provincial Estates intervene. Count William declared that he would stand by his hounds and his Jews against the whole world. Ossa concludes his report with the words 'God have pity on us!'[1]

A synod in Cassel complained bitterly in 1589 of the Jews 'who were chiefly instrumental in keeping the nobles above water.' Squire Werner of Gilsa is said to have declared openly before a whole community that he would like to see the village of Zimmersrode burnt to the ground, and he would then give all the acres and meadows into the hands of Jews only. 'The people were brought

[1] von Langenn, *M. von Ossa*, 151–152.

to such extremity by the Jews that on Sunday and on high Christian festivals they were obliged during service time to brew their beer, kill their cattle and commit field robberies for them.' [1]

'The poor Christians,' it was elsewhere complained, 'are obliged to do everything for the Jews that the latter exact of them. And this for no other reason than that they are so terribly in debt to the Jews with high, usurious interest and compound interest that frequently they have little or nothing that they can call their own. Often and often the fruits of the field are promised to the Jews long before they are garnered in, and how much is left for the poor peasants themselves and their wives and children? Tell me, I pray, how much cattle of their own do the peasants possess in those places where Jews are settled? Does it not all, or almost all, belong to the Jews? And those of the nobles who, being themselves indebted to the Jews, are their friends and abettors, allow all this to go on unpunished, do not protect the poor man on his land against the devil of usury, as they ought in justice to do, but, far from it, go on giving the Jews protection and support when the government of the land has ordered their expulsion.' [2]

When in the margraviate of Ansbach-Bayreuth, in 1558, stringent orders were issued that any Jew setting foot in the land without a safe-conduct should be an outlaw, and any money due to him by the subjects should be forfeited, the Jews established themselves firmly among the nobles, until in 1582 another princely edict was issued enjoining that without further ado they were to be expelled from all the lands of the

[1] *Zeitschr. für hessische Gesch. und Landeskunde*, vi. 312–314.

[2] Ehrhardt, Bl. B⁴.

nobles. Hatred of the Jews was so intense in the margraviate that in the tax-roll they were deliberately placed below the cattle; at public tribunals they were rated and scolded like unbelieving Chaldaeans and heathen, and an oath from a Jew was not recognised 'because they had no souls and no God.'[1] 'The Jews are enemies of God and of His Son,' said the Bayreuth Superintendent-General, Christopher Schleupner, in 1612, to the Margravine Maria, warning her earnestly against showing favour to and 'admitting into the country the accursed land-destroying Jews.' 'The curse of God,' he said, 'followed these outcast people and laid all houses and lands waste; they were assassins who put to death emperors, kings, electors and princes, and had not even spared the highly laudable, princely house of Brandenburg; they practised unutterable usury, as indeed was known from the calculations made by learned people in pamphlets showing that those who exact two pfennig a week on one gulden in twenty years with one florin, do the Christians out of 51,854 florins, 13 schillings and 3½ pfennig.'[2]

But in this quotation Schleupner was at fault. He no doubt based his statement on the 'Table of calculated rates of usury published in the same year by the Giessen theological faculty, showing what amount one gulden at fifteen batzen interest will realise in twenty years, with the capital added in.' This table was taken from a little book written in 1531 'as a warning to the Christians against the usury of the Jews.' It says, for instance: 'Two Frankfort pennies a week for one gulden produces interest as follows: in the first year, 11

[1] Lang, iii. 316-318. [2] Kraussold, 241-245.

schillings, 5 pfennig; in the next year, 1 gulden, 4 schillings, and 6 hellers; in the third year, 2 gulden, 6 schillings; . . . in the twelfth year, 110 gulden, 18 schillings, 6 hellers; . . . in the twentieth year, 2592 gulden, 17 schillings, 4 hellers. Item, 20 florins in twenty years according to this calculation, 51,854 florins, 3 sch., 6½ hellers.'[1] Thus Schleupner gave the interest calculated on twenty florins as that of one only.

Among the people such reckless statements as this must have contributed to raise their hatred of the Jews to the pitch of which Ehrhardt says 'in every single Jew they saw nothing but the devil incarnate.'[2]

'The devilish practice of the Jews with usury' amounted fully to four hellers a week for one gulden.[3] This, however, would be more bearable if they were not allowed so much other sort of fleecing. 'They are suffered to have a hand in every kind of trade and industry, and to rob the Christians in every possible manner, as we see daily before our eyes in all the places where they have intruded themselves.'[4]

Philip von Allendorf had already complained on this score in 1535 in his poem 'Der Juden Badstub'; in earlier times the Jews had only been allowed to practise usury with money; now, however, there was not a single trade left of which they had not become possessed; they did business in wine, corn, linen, woollen goods,

[1] *Theolog. Bedencken*, 28. [2] Ehrhardt, Bl. C¹.

[3] At Nuremberg, in 1618, a public pawnhouse was erected for the protection of the needy burghers who were obliged to give the Jews a weekly payment of three hellers out of every gulden. Siebenkees, iv. 570–571.

[4] Ehrhardt, Bl. C².

velvet, silk, spices, &c. 'They were the largest traders in the land.'

So tight they now put on the screws,
We Christians slaves are to the Jews,
A heart of stone it eke might touch
That they should harry us so much,
That they should screw us down so tight
And no one dare improve our plight.

In Germany, as in their Promised Land, they were freer than any people in Christendom.[1] In a 'comedy' known already at the beginning of the sixteenth century, and called 'Das Wohlgesprochene Urteil eines weiblichen Studenten' or 'der Jud von Venedig,' the Jews are blamed because, however narrow were the limitations imposed on their trade and business, they nevertheless spread themselves so far around that they not only got into their hands, by their usury, the property of many nobles and commoners, but also poached on royal preserves, 'getting their fingers in' to royal regalia, taxes and revenues. 'Naked and empty they must be driven out, then the land would be free from such vermin, and the subjects would no longer depend more on lending and borrowing than on handicraft and industry.'[2]

But 'however thick we may pile it on the Jews,' says a leaflet of the year 1590, 'is it not almost laughable, if it were not tragic? Who is it who lets them thus traffic without shame or scruple? Who helps them? Who is there who can do without them? Who without

[1] *Der Juden Badstub.* 'Ein anzeygung jrer mannigfeltigen, schedlichen Hendel zur Warnung allen Christen' (1535), Bl. B. $1^6$, C. 2, 4. In the years 1604 and 1611 the poem was reprinted; cf. Goedeke, *Grundriss*, ii. 281, No. 30.

[2] Meissner, *Die englischen Komödianten in Oesterreich* (Vienna, 1884), pp. 132, 133; cf. 106.

their help could fleece the poor peasants down to the very marrow, as has now become the custom ?'

The Jew's guilt is a score,
The Christian's ten times more.[1]

The way in which economic conditions 'in life, trade and business,' had shaped themselves is graphically depicted in a 'serious admonition to the whole of evangelical Germany' of the year 1616. 'We make war upon and exhaust the poor people daily, we take presents and usury from them, and we not only suffer that the Jews and the Christians should ruin each other, but we actually lend the Jews money ourselves in order to secure their help in draining the life-blood from our poor fellow-Christians. What has been the result of God's training during so many years by the enlightening evangel ? What has God's goodness and long-suffering produced ? It has verily brought up wolves which bite and devour the poor people.'

'The tremendous Jewish extortions proceed from idleness which, in the towns especially, has gained the upper hand. For the fruits of idleness are essentially lounging, gambling, extravagance in dress and housekeeping, making a fine display, whence follow all sorts of artful devices and tricks for getting hold of money. Now, when in town and country the young are thus brought up and instructed, what can be hoped for when these young people have grown to maturity ? The Jews are their schoolmasters, godless usurious people are their fathers and closest friends.'

'We look at each other and ask : how comes it to pass that there is thus no money among the people ?

[1] *Judenspiess und Christenspiess*, 'by a simple but thoughtful layman' (1590), p. 2.

What is the reason why everything is so dear? It comes in very great measure from the fact that we have an inordinate number of idling financiers and extortioners among us, who do no useful work of any sort, but amass enormous gains with very little capital by following the usurious practices of the Jews and other usurious Christians. Money goes out of the land to buy silk, velvet, passementerie and costly wares, also foreign wine and all sorts of lickerish, new and rare spices. And nobody consumes these things in greater excess and superfluity than these said idle usurers, extortioners, pensioners, and people living on their rents, Jews and Jews' associates.'

By reason of these capitalists living on unearned incomes, the working people became reduced to regular bond-service. 'Every working man in his particular calling was obliged to labour and pay for such people as well as for the Jews themselves. Since people need money, they are obliged to run after these extortioners, because no other means are at hand. In this way our Christian Jews, by dint of bills and writs, appropriate the houses and goods of the poor; they sweat and bleed them to death: a murder in the eyes of God. For all who are tributary and, as it were, holding a feof must hang on to their lords, must think, speak and do whatever their feudal lord or squire dictates or wishes. Thereby freedom is lost, votes are sold, and servitude more oppressive than of yore is entered.'

'Still more lamentable is it that when the father dies and the poor widows and orphans are left, the oppression, blood-sucking and extortion attain their climax; the poor bereaved families are driven to beggary or even to the grave—and all this, forsooth, must not be

called murder. Do we imagine that the righteous God will not take vengeance when such rack-renters and Judaïzers great and small make the poor man's poverty even more crushing, increase misery beyond all measure, ruin towns and villages, as it were rob and plunder them ? '

'Our fathers and forbears protected the poor, and lent money to those in need at four per cent. interest, as is seen from old letters of credit ; in all their dealings they were merciful, pitiful and honourable. They were plainly, simply and respectably clothed, their hands and their hearts were set on work and honesty ; whereas nowadays the majority wear whole shoploads of clothes and their hands and their hearts are not busy with work, virtue and honesty, but with wanton, luxurious dress and adornment : they are nothing more or less than sign boards of feminine and unsteady minds.'

'Everybody in all classes, high and low, learned and unlearned, burghers and peasants, rich and poor, is saying : this state of things cannot last in the long run, it must soon break up. Who has told this to everybody and to the common people ? In very truth their own consciences. Therefore, since at the present day this is recognised by the common people, it would be well if our intelligent politicians and councillors, in all places, were one day to join together in a better alliance and say out frankly why it is that our commonwealth cannot long stand, and what is to be done in order that we may return to and remain in national well-being. Otherwise the destruction and ruin of the German nation by foreign war is inevitable.' [1]

[1] *Reformatio Evangelicorum*, 8–17, 36, 40.

A Catholic priest, Wolfgang Städlmeyer, curate at Metten, who in the years 1589 and 1590, 'for the benefit of all and every good-hearted Christian' gave an enlightening account of 'all the conditions which had arisen out of extortionate interest and usury,' and in so doing 'came to speak about the despoiling of the Jews,' put the following question: 'How could the Jews have succeeded in working so much mischief and ruin with their usury and usurious contracts, money dealings, and all their other financial proceedings, if the Christians had not everywhere played into their hands, and by their laziness in work, their extravagance and love of display, come to need the Jews' assistance, and only too gladly run after them and participated in their "manœuvrings"? People complain of the Jews only, and forget to say, as in justice they should, *Mea maxima culpa*, my own fault is the greatest. Had we acted according to the teaching of the canon laws and the fathers and instructors of the Church, who forbid all interest and usury on pain of severe punishment, and had we earned our livelihoods by honourable work in industries and trade as is everybody's duty, we should not have come to all this misery and ruin, which are now seen in all classes. For Church laws and edicts the majority now care no whit; they laugh at and ridicule those that are still opposed to taking interest and usury on money. Of those who have a little money and property, especially the young generation, only a few care nowadays to work industriously; they prefer to lounge about idly, to spend money, and make a dash; they want to grow rich at one go by interest, bonds, money-changing, and all sorts of nefarious arts and practices. In all this the Jews are

their best helpers and masters. And everything goes to the profit of the Jews and the Christian Jew-associates, to the ruin of all those among the burghers and the peasants who earn their daily bread in the sweat of their brow, and the uncircumcised Jews are often much worse than the circumcised ones.' 'In former days usury brought people into ridicule and disgrace. A usurer's house or den was always called the devil's property; no right-minded person would have borrowed a light from him; the children in the street fled from such people. Now, however, Christianity has increased to such an extent that people take their hats off to usurers; when Jews die they are buried with great splendour like any pious Christians.' Burghers and peasants came to ruin through the usurers; money and property came into the hands of few. 'Possessions that have long been very dear and precious to some owner, must be valued, sold for half the price, in order that the usurer might have his money with interest.' 'When all the members of the community have each something, then things go well; but when property gets into a heap, it is the ruin of the country.'

'Only when all has gone to sixes and sevens, when a small band of Jews and Christian Jews have got all the money and land into their own hands, when money alone is productive, and labour has consequently become unproductive, when most of the artisans, burghers and peasants are sold out and impoverished, and reduced to beggary, then only will it be recognised how more than wise were the Church and her holy teachers and the canon law in their enactments against interest and usury, and in classing usurers with robbers, incendiaries and thieves, putting them under the ban,

refusing them Christian burial, and treating their wills and testaments as invalid; and how salutary and useful these stringent laws and penalties have been to the whole nation, high and low, however much the idle money-grabbers, usurers, financiers, and fleecers of the people may rage at and abuse them.' [1]

As 'a special kind of usury and extortion which the Jews and the Jews' associates practised not only among mercantile people, but also among princes, counts and lords, and municipal authorities, to the direst ruin of the subjects, and the heightening of the prices of all food and wares,' Städlmeyer describes 'the most unholy proceedings with coinage, viz. adulteration, clipping, falsification, and transporting good coinage, and everything else connected with this godless traffic.' 'Wherefore,' he concludes, 'it would be no wonder if God were to set fire to all the produce of the mines in punishment of these offenders.' [2]

[1] B. Städlmeyer, *Kurtze doch nützliche Lehr vom Geitz und seinen Früchten allermeist aber vom Wucher, dem gemeynen Laster* (dedicated to the hereditary marshal of the Tyrolese, Balthasar Trautson, baron zu Sprechenstein und Schroffenstein), Ingolstadt, 1859, pp. 34, 53, 108, 112–113. (Predigt) *vom Zinsnehmen und Wuchern und was damals für Schaden und Verderbniss erfolgt* (Ingolstadt, 1590), pp. 4–5, 8.

[2] *Vom Zinsnehmen*, 11.

## CHAPTER II

### MINTING AND MINING

ANOTHER cause of most serious damage to German trade and commerce, as well as to the whole internal economy of the nation, was the unspeakable confusion and disorganisation which prevailed in the mint system, and which increased from decade to decade. Amid the growing anarchy in all financial and monetary affairs the general condition of people and of state presented a melancholy aspect.

Imperial mint ordinances of 1524, 1551 and 1559, as well as earlier and later recesses and imperial edicts, intended to remedy the evils, all proved futile. The emperors who issued them took not the slightest trouble to enforce them in their hereditary lands; 'for many years it was impossible to arrive at instituting a uniform, constant, and genuine system of coinage in the empire.' After the hope of effecting unity by means of imperial statutes had been abandoned, the management of the mint was made over to the Circle administration; but the decision of the Frankfort Assembly of Deputies in 1571 to erect mint-houses for the different circles was not carried into effect. Smaller mint associations also which were formed between South German towns, between Rhenish electors and between Hanseatic towns failed to produce any improvement. In consequence

of the religious disturbances the Estates were so estranged from and hostile to each other that they even fought each other in the matter of coinage. All, even the least important of them, claimed independent mint rights and exploited them to their own advantage in every imaginable way. They overreached each other as much as possible by melting down the large good coins and substituting for them small inferior kinds of money, and they even went so far as to defraud each other by adulteration of coins, especially in regard to alloy. In addition to the innumerable different minting-places already existing there sprang up a multitude of coining dens, in which falsification of coins was practised on a large scale.[1]

Nearly everything connected with coinage turns on 'draining and squeezing' the industrious members of society, and the manœuvrings that went on to this end were diverse and manifold. Some of the dodges are recounted by Cyriakus Spangenberg in 1592. He writes, for instance: 'The great lords do not act rightly when they shut their eyes and allow their ministers to strike coins below the standard value in order that they may have more money for themselves. Item, when for their own personal ends they allow false coins to be smuggled into the country. Item, when the rulers suppress, or even prohibit for a time, the inferior coinage and substitute a worse. Then, after one, two or three years, little by little, liberate it. Then once again withhold and forbid the worse coins, and thus once

[1] See Bode, 93 ff. Schmoller, *Ansichten*, 620 ff. Newald, *Österr. Münzwesen unter Maximilian II.*, &c., pp. 18 ff., 23, 65, 76, 194. Friese, *Müntzspiegel*, 206–207. ** Concerning the disorganisation of the coinage system in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see also Steinhausen, *Der Kaufmann in der deutschen Vergangenheit*, p. 87 ff.

more effect a substitute, in order to reap the same profit afresh. Also when they pay their vassals their wages, or buy from them with light weight coin, but refuse to take similar money from them in exchange for corn, wood and other articles, compelling them to pay for such things, and also to pay their taxes with heavy weight coin.'[1]

Bitter complaints were also raised against the merchant and trading societies for their oppression and bleeding of the people not only by usurious interest but also by manipulation of the coinage. 'These merchants,' said the Frankfort preacher Melchior Ambach in 1551, 'far outstrip the Jews in usurious practices; they despoil and ruin all the princes in the land, get possession through usury and financing of all the coins of the realm, they clip and wash them, and then affix to them whatever value best suits themselves. In all these proceedings they think very little about the poor Lazarus lying hungry at their door.'[2] 'These godless people,' wrote an Esslingen chronicler, 'carry on such an amount of coin-making that it is quite lamentable. The plague take the coin-debasers!'[3]

Another grievance, incessantly aired at all imperial, deputy and mint diets, was 'that German money so rich in weight and value' was sent abroad in an excessive manner. 'I know from personal experience,' wrote, for instance, George Ilsung, bailiff of Suabia, from Augsburg to the Emperor on December 21, 1569, 'that a goodly number of well-known merchants in this town

[1] *Nützlicher Tractat vom rechten Gebrauch und Missbrauch der Müntzen*, in Friese, *Müntzspiegel*, Appendix, 239 ff.

[2] Anbach, *Kluge*, Bl. D 4.

[3] Pfaff, *Gesch. von Esslingen*, 722.

have within four months, openly and despite the Mint regulations and the imperial coinage statutes, sent out to Venice and thence on to Turkey more than 500,000 gulden at an interest of 50 per cent. From this it follows that not only here in Augsburg, but also in Nuremberg, there is such a dearth of money that all business is at a standstill; no tradesman can any longer deal with other tradesmen, nor get hold of any money; and all this is having a most injurious effect not only on the general prosperity of Germany but also on the whole of Christendom.' According to a trustworthy report there were at that time more thalers and gulden in Constantinople and Alexandria than could be obtained in the whole Roman Empire, 'so that the Turk can now make war upon us not on the strength of his own but of our money, which is conveyed to him freely and openly for the sake of sinful gain.' [1]

In place of 'the good German money' all sorts of inferior foreign coins were brought into the country and circulated, and however often 'this unholy practice, which exhausted the empire,' was forbidden, it nevertheless made such rapid strides in the course of the sixteenth century, that, as the Emperor declared in 1607, 'it was just as if we said to the foreigners: "Come, take our good money and make bad false coins out of it: we will accept them as gladly as the good ones."' [2] In the Italian States, where there was a lack of mines, German gold and silver money was brought into the mints; [3] in Holland it was melted down into gold and

[1] *Reichstagshandlungen*, de anno 1570, vol. i. 529–531, in the Frankfort Archives.

[2] Hirsch, iii. 329.

[3] *Ibid.* ii. 162, 350. Fischer, iv. 697–698.

silver ingots ; [1] in Poland, German imperial thalers were made into inferior coins, but in the sale of their goods the Poles would not accept payment in their own coins, which had been smuggled into the empire.[2] 'In Augsburg and Nuremberg,' wrote the imperial treasurer, Zacharias Geizkofler, in 1607, 'there are a number of traders who make coarse silver ware in great quantities, whole bathing sets for instance, out of our good coins, and send these articles to Poland where they are again made into coins.'[3]

In Russia, as the Jesuit, Anton Possevin, wrote from Moscow in 1581, solid German thalers were made into rubles and smaller coins; in Tripolis, according to a report of the Augsburg physician, Rauwolf, in 1573, Turkish coins were made out of old Joachimsthalers.[4]

There were also in the empire 'quantities of different kinds of foreign coin, of which not merely 10 or 20, but actually 50, 60, and 70 per cent. were below the genuine legal standard.[5] In Würtemberg and Suabia there were only a few imperial coins, scarcely anything but inferior and heavily clipped Spanish, Italian, and Polish money. The Franconian circle was also deluged with bad foreign coins.'[6] The Bavarian towns and markets complained in 1605: 'There were probably

[1] Fischer, iv. 688. [2] Hirsch, iii. 144, 155, 198, 293.

[3] *Ibid.* 291. See the complaints of the deputies from the imperial cities of the year 1550 in Hirsch, i. 319. For Upper and Lower Silesia Ferdinand I. issued in 1546 a 'coin and silver *pagament* mandate' in which he decreed the punishment of death by fire of exporting 'silver and "pagament" from the country,' without regard to the rank of the offender. Steinbeck, i. 168.

[4] Fischer, iv. 700, 707. [5] Hirsch, iii. 328.

[6] *Ibid.* 32, 138, 217. Sattler, v. 175. Fischer, iv. 644.

over 200,000 white, foreign, bad pfennigs in circulation.'[1] 'The result of all this highly pernicious exporting of good German money and smuggling in of bad foreign coins was plain to the eyes of the whole world; everybody was bewailing the state of things, but with the want of unity and the disorganised condition of the empire, nobody knew how to improve matters.'

'From the tolerance of inferior bad foreign coins there resulted pre-eminently,' as was pointed out in the Recess of a Mint Assembly at Nördlingen in 1564, 'higher prices and scarcity of all foodstuffs and other necessaries and the daily fall and debasing of coinage. Foreign nations bring into the empire the bad, inferior coins which have been struck out of good German gold and silver, and pass them off on the unwary, simple, poor man; change and transport the good coins, and thus the empire of the German nation is entirely drained of its good gold and silver. What losses are by this means incurred by all classes, high and low, on their yearly incomes, earned and unearned, their rents, interest and so forth, and also how greatly such persons are injured by the base foreign coins, who invest their ready money and interest, and then receive all their income in such inferior coin, any reasonable being can calculate for himself.'[2] In a memorandum of the Franconian, Bavarian and Suabian Circle of 1585, this was dwelt on still more emphatically: 'All reasonable people must recognise that unless steps are taken to avert the evil, lords, rulers, subjects and bond-servants must inevitably all go to ruin together owing to this criminal tolerance.

[1] von Freyberg. i. 44. [2] Hirsch, ii. 18.

Commerce itself will be destroyed if this unhappy state of disorganisation is much longer connived at; for although many people let themselves be persuaded that if this bad money were repudiated all business dealings would be completely upset and ruined, it is nevertheless according to common sense and daily experience to say that no good or useful trade or industry has ever maintained itself in the long run by the use of inferior, foreign, and forbidden coin. On the contrary, it is always found that countries and nations are ruined by bad coinage, and that the lack of good coinage is always an unmistakable sign that the ruin of the land and empire will speedily follow.' [1]

But all admonitions were 'as words uttered to the wind.' In 1607 things had come to such a pass that there were scarcely any large gold or silver imperial coins, but only foreign inferior coins made out of German gold and silver, and the few large coins that were still current had risen inordinately, and still day by day were exchanged at prices fixed arbitrarily by private persons! 'The whole currency of the empire was almost reduced to debased foreign coins, and there was more speculation in coins than in wares.'

'If we look away,' says a pamphlet of 1612, 'from the fraudulent abstracting of good German money, as well as from the innumerable kinds of bad foreign money with which we are cheated, and turn our eyes

[1] Geizkofler's *Bedencken* of the year 1607, in Hirsch, iii. 286–287. Cf. the Brandenburg-Ansbach memorandum of 1602, in Hirsch, iii. 208. The archducal chamber in the Tyrol complained in 1590 as follows: 'It has come to pass that wealthy merchants find more profit in the exchange of money than in the distribution of their wares.' Hirn, vii. 584, n. 4.

to the German mint-owners themselves, what can we say about them ? There are no doubt some honourable princes and persons of lower rank, who would not knowingly defraud the poor with bad money, but I cannot mention any such by name. On the other hand I have often heard thoughtful and upright men say : " If you talk of rare birds, in our times, in the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation, an upright, honest mint-master is about the rarest that can be found." And in truth there is such an amount of falsifying, debasing, remodelling of values according to arbitrary caprice, going on incessantly with the coinage, and all to the inordinate oppression of the poor, who are utterly in the dark as to whether they have good or false coin, half, a third or a quarter of the right value of their money, or how long the good money will retain its value, and are completely at sea with all the innumerable coins that are in circulation whether inland, or (and these are the most numerous) foreign ones. I estimate the number of such coins at 2000–3000, but it may be very much larger.' [1] Undoubtedly it was larger. The mint-contractor, Bartholomew Albrecht, in 1606, in a memorandum to the imperial court, said : ' There are about 5000 kinds of coin with different dies in circulation, and it is no longer possible to learn whence these different coins come.' [2]

' All the world,' this pamphlet goes on, ' mints in Germany nowadays and issues coins. Circumcised Jews, and still worse uncircumcised ones, all manner of low

[1] *Wider die verbrecherischen Münzherren und Münzfälscher* (they must bend or break) (without locality, 1612), p. 2.

[2] Newald, *Österr. Münzwesen unter Maximilian II.*, &c., p. 77.

riff-raff and vagrants become mint-masters, and even governors, for many of the Estates of the empire are not ashamed to lease or sell their minting rights for good money or advantageous bargains, and thus for a long time a godless state of things has prevailed, and it is growing worse every year.' [1]

This complaint was well founded.

'From time immemorial,' wrote the Emperor Maximilian II. in 1571, 'we had had in our mints none but honest pious workers, trained to their business. Since, however, the fraudulent coining dens have been started, "loose wanton fellows, called mite-makers," have managed to get into the mints here and there. In addition to these there are in many places forgers, braziers, locksmiths, linen and wool weavers, and many more of this sort who have abandoned their own trades, and are now employed by avaricious, money-getting mint-managers to make false counterfeit coin.' [2]

In 1576 the Emperor intimated to the Estates that 'if affairs were not better looked into, every impecunious merchant, Jew and goldsmith would turn into a mint-manager, and these people persuade the lords that it is in their power to procure them some great advantage, that they might even in return for the concession of the yearly coining give them 40, 50, or even 100 gulden for one gulden; in secret, however, they do these lords and others out of many thousands of gulden, not to mention the fact that these same lords in whose names this false coinage is minted, lose their good repute and must naturally expect all sorts of bad talk about themselves. It has been well said that a prince's

[1] See above, n. 1, p. 77.

[2] Hirsch, ii. 116.

uprightness might be known by three things, viz. keeping the streets clean, fulfilment of his promises, and the character of his mint.' 'And,' said the Emperor in conclusion, 'there is no worse kind of robbery than wittingly to coin false money.' [1]

As regards the 'godless transactions' that went on in selling and leasing mints there were incessant and ever-louder complaints at numerous Mint Diets from the different Circles one against the other. Thus, for instance, in a report of the Lower Rhine Circle concerning the coining of money, it says: 'In the Upper Rhine Circle there have been found mint-owners who for their own profit and for the sake of shameful usury, in direct opposition to the imperial constitution, have sold their mint rights to other financial persons.' Things had come to such a pass that 'the management of the Mint was allowed to remain in the hands of godless Jews and egotistical träders, and the end of it will be that every private individual in the high department of the Mint will proceed at his own caprice and hourly give different values to the different coins, altering and raising them at his pleasure.' [2]

'According to the report on the Mints,' wrote Geizkofler in 1607, 'small coins are minted which are 20, 30, 40, and even more per cent. below standard, bearing the heads, titles and names of ecclesiastical and secular

[1] Hirsch, ii. 239–240. 'Dishonest mint owners not only went to greater and greater lengths in the decreasing of values, but even dared to use the dies of upright princes, who had to go through the sickening experience of seeing coins of very false value bearing their own names, arms and likenesses. Coins moreover which had proceeded from mints whose governors were so highly respected that no one dared bring a reproach against them.' Klotzsch, i. 321.

[2] Hirsch, iii. 242–243.

princes who have leased for a yearly income or sold their mints to private persons, both Christians and Jews.'[1]

It was especially the 'smaller Estates of the empire that were given to breaking and melting the good, larger coins and minting bad, inferior ones, such as half-batzen, drei-kreuzers and pfennigs, and thus deriving great profit for themselves.' It was calculated that a mint-owner with six workers could in one week produce as many as 400 or more marks in half-batzen: hence 'this sort was made in very large quantities';[2] every mint-worker could earn seven to nine florins a week by half-batzen.[3] As great, if not greater, 'were the profits from the production of light, bad and inferior pfennigs.' The counts of Erbach and Wertheim coined such pfennigs in large quantities;[4] 'the counts at Solms, the Rhinegraves and others,' so runs the complaint of the Lower Rhine Circle in 1602, 'in some places employed over twenty persons for the sole purpose of oppressing the poor people, and the mint pays the rulers 2000, or maybe 1500 florins.'[5] Count

[1] Hirsch, iii. 287. In 1612, Geizkofler wrote in a memorandum to the Emperor: 'Things have come to such a pass with the mints that not only every one of the Estates, however insignificant, has his own way with the weight and value of the coins, but even the tradespeople and merchants raise or sink the value of different kinds of money from day to day, as indeed the daily experience of the subjects of the Empire in the damage they sustain indisputably shows.' Lünig, *Staatsconsilia*, i. 772.

[2] Hirsch, ii. 349. [3] *Ibid.* 289. [4] *Ibid.* 84.

[5] *Ibid.* iii. 303. The Ratisbon Imperial Recess of 1603 said: 'At this imperial assembly it came out that in several places, especially in the Upper Rhine Circle, there had been found mint owners who employed twenty and more workers solely for the fabrication of bad coins not coming up to the requirements of the mint ordinance, and showing a deficiency of 20, 23, 24, 26, and more gulden per cent.' *Neue Sammlung der*

Ludwig von Stolberg, at Königstein in the Taunus, in 1573 had 313,608 pfennigs struck out of 438 marks within four months; in Frankfort itself out of every mark, instead of the prescribed 700, he coined 856 pfennigs; in 1568 there had already been a complaint from the Council of 'the bad Königstein coins which are minted here.'[1]

The Palatine Counts Richard von Simmern and George Hans von Veldenz and other princes coined such bad half-batzen that 'each gulden worked out at two-thirds or even three-quarters above standard;[2] half-kreuzers were sometimes "to the grievous damage of the poor man" coined at 17–26 gulden, pfennigs at more than 40 gulden above their true value; thus out of 100 gulden actually 75 were lost.'[3]

The Frankfort Fair was described as the most iniquitous place for the introduction and circulation of bad coins. 'Almost all bad coins, dreikreuzer and half-batzen,' such was the complaint made at a Franconian Circle Diet at Nuremberg in 1585, 'come from the Netherlands and the Rhine to Frankfort, whence they are distributed in the Franconian Circle, so that it

*Reichsabschiede*, iii. 511. In 1570 it was said in the Recess of the Spires Diet: 'Although according to the Mint edict of 1559 only 636 pfennigs go to the Cologne mark, and of the hellers out of a pure Cologne mark (feine Kölnische Mark) not more than 11 gulden 5 kreuzer must be produced, it is nevertheless notorious how audaciously the famous edict is defied, as some mints coin 800 pfennigs out of a mark, some even 900; likewise with the hellers there is no limit, and they frequently buy up good imperial coins, throw them into the crucible, recoin them into bad pfennigs or hellers, and flood the country with them.' *Neue Sammlung*, iii. 304.

[1] P. Joseph in the *Mitteilungen des Vereins für Gesch. und Altertumskunde*, in Frankfort-on-the-Maine, vi. 207–208, 217, 218.

[2] Hirsch, ii. 300 ff.

[3] Häberlin, xv. 489, and xx. 6, 316. Hirsch, iii. 257; cf. 262.

is very disastrous to this circle to carry on trade and industry with Frankfort and the Rhine.'[1]

At the Frankfort Fair it was easier to set bad coins in circulation, as in the great crowd of strangers and foreigners gathered together there was less risk of being at once recognised as a false coiner; inferior half-batzen, groschen and pfennigs were taken there 'in cartloads and barrelfuls.'[2]

In Austria, so it was said, 'whole herring barrels full of pfennigs of extraordinarily inferior value were brought into the imperial hereditary lands.'[3]

In Brandenburg the Elector John Sigismund complained in 1617 that his country was flooded with bad pfennigs. 'It is well known that one single man has brought as many as 25 cwt. of such pfennigs into the land; others have pronounced themselves ready, in return for a sum of 2000 thalers in Reichsgroschen, to pay back within three weeks 3000 thalers in pfennigs. Nobody, however, will take these pfennigs from our subjects at their old value, and so they remain on their hands, and many a man, although he has plenty of these pfennigs to pay with, can get neither bread nor beer for them; those who dwell on the borders and have anything to sell, keep quite clear of our lands.'[4]

Similar complaints were made in Pomerania,[5] where the secret, fraudulent traffic in coined metal was in the

[1] Hirsch, ii. 330–334.

[2] P. Joseph, see above, p. 1, n. 81. Häberlin, xx. 311. ** At Strasburg in 1589 the Council issued an order against falsifiers of coin and distributors of inferior sorts of money to the effect that they should be deprived of all their posts and honourable offices. Reuss, 113.

[3] Newald, *Österr. Münzwesen unter Maximilian II.*, &c., p. 77.

[4] Mylius, iv. Abt. 1, 1187.

[5] Dähnert, i. 605; cf. iii. 645.

hands of the numerous Scotchmen who had migrated there. These people bought up the full-weight coins of the land with bad moneys in order to melt them down, and set bad money in circulation.[1]

In Mecklenburg the Provincial Estates complained in 1609 that 'out of good silver, by addition of copper, bad coins were struck and spread among the people.'[2]

Fear was expressed that 'if this sort of minting and coining went on much longer there would at last be nothing but small, bad sorts of copper money in the country'; whereas formerly 'no copper coins had been minted in the empire, nowadays copper was gaining pre-eminence, because gold and silver failed.'[3] 'Whereas the bad sorts of money,' wrote the Upper Saxon General-mint-warden, Christopher Biner, in 1609, 'are now so common and in full sway, so much so that scarcely any others are current, silver coinage, unless the rulers proceed rigorously against this abuse, will be at last completely superseded by copper coinage.'[4] In a rhymed dialogue entitled 'Neues Gespräch von dem jetzigen unerträglichen Geldaufsteigen und elenden Zustand im Münzwesen' the coins discourse about their rise and fall:

When gold and silver metal far
And wide adulterated are,
Where at last will coin be found
That has the proper ring and sound?
Is it not a shame and brand
That Jews should mint in German land?

[1] Riemann, 602.
[2] Franck, *Buch* xii. 96.
[3] In the pamphlet, p. 3, quoted above at p. 77, n. 1.
[4] Klotzsch, ii. 449.

The copper says:

For your complaints no whit I care,
The case brings honour to my share;
For silver only and for gold
Was any friendship shown of old;
Copper then took a place behind,
But things quite altered now you 'll find,
Gold and silver now have fled
And copper come up in their stead.
How will it please your honours when
From copper money 's made for men ? [1]

From the enormous circulation in the empire of bad foreign money, and all sorts of small German money intentionally coined below standard value, there had resulted a rise in the value of the good, large coins of which the inevitable consequence was a serious rise in the prices of all commodities. Formerly the imperial thaler (Reichsthaler) was worth only 60 kreuzer;[2] at the Diet of 1556 it was settled that 68 kreuzer were to be equal to 1 thaler; in 1585 the thaler was raised to about 74 kreuzer, in 1596 to 84, in 1607 to 88, in 1616 to 90, in 1618 to 92.[3] Already

[1] Without locality, 1609. 'It cannot be denied,' wrote the Duchess Elizabeth of Brunswick in 1545, 'that in a few years, owing to the quantity of minting that went on in these and all the surrounding lands, great damage accrued; for when there was not a sufficient supply of silver they made the alloy too coarse, and debased nearly all the coins.' Von Strombeck, *Deutscher Fürstenspiegel.*

[2] Hirsch, iii. 150.

[3] Cf. Roscher, *Deutsche Nationalökonomik au der Grenzscheide*, 329. Geizkofler's *Bedencken* in Hirsch, iii. 288. In Hesse, in 1592, the imperial thaler was worth 32 albuses = 24 groschen = 18 batzen; in 1607 it was raised to 33 albuses; in the years 1608–1609 to 34; in 1610 to 36; in 1610–1612 to 40; in 1613–1615 to 44; in 1616–1618 to 48 albuses. *Jahrbücher für Nationalökonomie*, xix. 156–157. In the County of Lippe, whose coins were in evil repute, the thaler, in 1606, was still worth 24 Fürstengroschen; later it was fixed at 56, and even 63 Fürstengroschen. Falke, *Gesch. des Handels*, ii. 384. Concerning the rise in value of 'the good and genuine imperial thaler' in Northern Germany, which occurred in 1536–1618, see the Kur-Braunschweig-Lüneburg *Landesordnungen und Gesetze*, iii. (Göttingen, 1740), 400–406.

in 1576 it was stated in a memorandum sent to the Estates of the empire: 'Whereas all too many inferior coins are made in the land, it comes about that not only thalers and other good coins are broken up, but the good thalers and gold guldens that are left over rise enormously in value, and thus all the electors, princes and estates sustain the greatest loss and damage, for they lose nearly the third part of their yearly incomes solely because the inferior coin is more and more used in the country; for in former years with 26 albuses of coin of the land one gold gulden could be bought, because 26 albuses were equal to the value of one gold gulden; now one must give 36 albuses in exchange for a gold gulden, the loss by which is easy to reckon.'[1] As regards the effect on trade of all this inferior coinage, a report of the Suabian Circle Diet of 1584 said: 'The country is in the greatest danger; if these abuses are not checked it will soon come about that solely by reason of these bad, inferior batzen commerce will be at a deadlock, greatly to the loss and detriment of the whole German nation, and land and people must inevitably be ruined.'[2]

'To all other evils there was added the falsification of coins, which went on with gathering force, just like a highly lucrative handicraft, and was effected in manifold ways, by clipping, cementing, breaking, washing, filtering, casting, replating and granulating;' mint-masters themselves joined with their workmen in this criminal business.[3]

[1] Hirsch, ii. 238. [2] *Ibid.* ii. 301.

[3] Under the heading 'Münz-Verfälschen' the register of the second and third volumes of the *Münzarchiv* of Hirsch gives a mass of references in proof of this.

After the last third of the sixteenth century the number of so-called 'Kipper und Wipper' (clippers and sweaters) grew to the height of a veritable land plague and national pestilence. Towns which minted good coins, for instance Augsburg in 1573, were the most exposed to this clipping and snipping.[1] At a coin-testing Diet at Frankfort-on-the-Oder in 1573, the General-mint-warden of the Upper Saxon Circle said: 'From the small coins, unequal in weight, the heavier pieces were picked out and only the lightest were left in circulation: these had then to be recoined at a loss. The Jews were blamed for this, but the Christians had also learnt the trick very well indeed, and it had become quite common among them, in spite of the penalty of death by fire which was attached to it, because in reality no punishment ever followed: it was most urgently necessary to put a stop to this evil practice of clipping.' But, however much people complained, the abuse went on unchecked.[2]

In 1586 some of the Hansa towns were accused of having carried on clipping and snipping and other nefarious arts.[3] At Easter 1604 the 'clipping' business was begun at the fair at Leipzig.[4] Simultaneously also it was started in the Mark of Brandenburg.[5] In 1609, Wolf Krämer, General-assayer of the Upper Rhine Circle, said that the coins were often clipped to such an extent that out of one hundred ducats

[1] Häberlin, ix. 74; cf. Hirn, i. 593, concerning the old, good Tyrolese coins.

[2] Falke, *Kurfürst August*, xlvi. 51.

[3] Fischer, iv. 655.

[4] Vogel, 331.

[5] Küster, *Antiquitates Tangermundenses: II.* Rittners *altmärkisches Geschichtsbuch*, 23.

ten, twelve, thirteen, or more pieces were wanting.[1] In 1614 a Diet for testing coinage was held at Ratisbon in consequence of 'the almost universal prevalence of this iniquitous practice of money-clipping.'[2] Among the mint-masters there were frequent complaints that the merchants clipped and sweated the heaviest coins.[3]

Side by side with clipping, the 'genuine false minting was at many periods and in many places in the fullest swing,' in spite of the frightful penalties attached to false coining. When in 1564 a goldsmith, who had cast false coins, was condemned to death by fire in accordance with the criminal ordinance of Charles V., the Elector Augustus of Saxony approved of this sentence because 'such rascally tricks as falsification of coin, &c., had become so extremely common that the rigour of the sword must be enforced as an example and a warning to others'; whereas, however, the offender had 'only cast 9 fl. groschen,' he wished to mitigate the punishment to 'both ears being cut off at the pillory, a false thaler being branded on the criminal's forehead, and banishment from the country for life.' The following year eight men were sent to prison at Leipzig and at Pirna for false coining.[4] Count

[1] *Drei unterschiedl. newe Münzedicta*, &c. (Frankfort-on-the-Maine, 1609), p. 25.

[2] v. Stetten, i. 811.

[3] 'Münzprobationsabschied des obersächsischen Kreises vom 7. Mai 1618,' in Hirsch, iv. 107.

[4] Falke, *Kurfürst August*, 36–37. The Englishman, John Taylor, says in his accounts of his travels, written from Hamburg in 1616: 'They have in this country extraordinary modes of death by torture, varying according to the nature of the crimes committed: for example, anyone who falsifies a prince's coin is punished by being boiled to death in oil, and moreover the victim is not put at once into the vessel, but by means

Ludwig von Stolberg charged the council at Frankfort-on-the-Maine with not keeping close enough watch on the false coiners, and on the Jews who set their productions in circulation.[1] The town council of Cologne was accused in 1582 of having harboured and let off without punishment persons who had a large quantity of false crowns about them, some of which they had circulated.[2] The Westphalian Circle at a Mint Diet in 1584 issued a proscription against false thalers 'which were all copper inside with a thick plating of silver outside.'[3] At a Mint Diet at Ratisbon in 1595 false thalers were shown which were not worth more than two pfennig the mark, and which had been coined by David Kissmeier from Pomerania.[4] Three years later the Duke of Jülich's mint-master came under suspicion 'as regards the stamping of false gold guldens.'[5] Under the die of the Abbot of Stablo false thalers, not worth more than eight batzen, were issued.[6] In Brandenburg, the Elector John Sigismund sold the mint which he had erected at Driesen on the Polish frontier to a mint-master who then set in circulation counterfeit Hungarian ducats, thalers and groschen.[7] In Pomerania clever rogues were

of ring and rope hung up under the shoulders he is let down gradually into the oil, first his feet, then his legs, so that his flesh is stewed on him while he is still alive.' *Zeitschr. für Hamburger Gesch.*, vii. 463. In Bremen in 1519 a false coiner was burnt in a pan in the public market-place, and another one was boiled in a kettle at Osnabrück in 1531. The same *Zeitschr.*, iv. 369–370. Other cases of the sort occurred at Augsburg and Nuremberg in 1563, 1564, 1617, &c. Knapp, p. 260.

[1] P. Joseph, see above, p. 81, n. 1.
[2] Hirsch, ii. 286.
[3] Häberlin, xiv. 53.
[4] Hirsch, iii. 50.
[5] *Ibid.* 118 ff.
[6] *Ibid.* ii. 221.
[7] *Ibid.* iv. 25.

able to strike shillings out of copper and then stew them in tartaric acid till they had the appearance of genuine coins.[1] In Brunswick the government under Duke Frederick Ulrich forced on the subjects, as imperial coins of full value, false groschen, thirty of which it was pretended were worth an imperial thaler, but which in reality were not worth $1\frac{1}{2}$ pfennig apiece.[2] In many places in the empire quantities of worthless iron and pewter and tinplate pfennigs were palmed off on the 'poor, simple country people' instead of good money.[3]

In the last decade before the Thirty Years' War the entire mint system had lapsed into such a wretched and intolerable condition that 'a rising of the common people so heavily laden with taxes and burdens, a rising worse even than any peasant's war had been, seemed imminent.'[4] Many of the Imperial Estates themselves in the years 1611 and 1615 dreaded 'a rising of the common people,' on account of the prevalent coinage abuses.[5]

[1] Riemann, 610. Bode, 166.

[3] Hirsch, ii. 288, and iii. 142.

[4] 'Wider die verbrecherischen Münzherren und Münzfälscher,' see above, p. 77, n. 1.

[5] See the documents in Hirsch, iv. 3. 67. ** Interesting information concerning the mint system of the sixteenth century may be found in the chronicle of John Oldecop of Hildesheim, published by Euling. 'At this time,' writes this chronicler in 1510, 'everything remained at the right price because the coinage was good and not falsified, and coins were never struck out of other coins. If at this time anyone was found to have clipped coins, that person was hung; he who struck false coins was stewed alive in a pan till his flesh fell from his bones. In those days the rulers were satisfied with the taxes and rents of their tenants and did not connive at the burghers and peasants who enriched themselves by practising fraud and cunning towards their neighbours or towards strangers. In those days people were obliged to

The decline of minting was closely connected with the decline of the mining industry.[1]

'While all good gold and silver coinage,' says the Würtemberg councillor, George Gadner, in a memorandum on mintage of the year 1594, 'had quite disappeared from the whole of Germany, and those of the Imperial Estates who did not possess mines of their

go at least twice a year to confession; and confession kept many back from wickedness. And this fact was first realised when Dr. Martin Luther forbade confession and (though this is publicly denied) attributed salvation to faith alone' (p. 33). That Luther did actually forbid confession cannot exactly be said, but certainly 'confession' dropped out as useless with Luther's advent; with him 'penitence' is only alarm of the conscience, and faith, whence proceeds forgiveness. It is therefore legitimate to connect the cessation, the giving up of confession with Luther. Hergenröther, *Kirchengesch.*, ii. 253. The later coinage troubles as well as the high prices (cf. 107–108) are also attributed by Oldecop directly to the Lutheran doctrine. 'In this year (1554) the freedom of the Lutheran teaching produced numbers of false coins, not only in silver money but also in gold gulden. Many false thalers were coined; some were too light, some were of lead, some of copper and of false granulation. Besides which the rulers in whose countries the false thalers are coined, allowed inscriptions to be fraudulently stamped on them, and they did this so skilfully that anyone not examining the thaler very closely, might have thought it was a good thaler and coined by this or that pious prince. False currency and rubbishy pfennigs were innumerable. Thieving, wickedness and falsehood were regarded at this period as a means of livelihood and as good business transactions. Some of the small shopkeepers and other tradespeople made coins out of coins, nine to the silver groschen or three Mathier (a small coin current in Lower Saxony). The financiers took the coins from Hildesheim to Leipzig, where they gave four pfennigs for one silver groschen, when they had had nine pfennigs struck to one silver groschen. Others carried their shop goods into the country round about, or to a camp, and changed their false coins into thalers and gold. Then, when their own coins were given back to them in payment for groceries or silk stuffs they would not take them. These defrauders and cheats were scattered all over the country and the rulers connived at it and let their burghers enrich themselves by such dishonesty, so that their taxes and dues might be all the higher' (p. 380).

[1] Concerning the mines and their yield at the close of the Middle Ages, see vol. ii. pp. 39–42.

own stamped and circulated nothing but bad provincial coins of inferior value struck from good imperial money, no other money could be brought into the empire because of the failure of the fountain-head, the mines. For nearly all mines in Germany have fallen off, are dug out and exhausted, many important veins are dried up, and still more excellent mining works, as well in Bohemia and Meissen as in other lands, have sunk so much and have become so flooded that they cannot be worked at a profit, and no more, or at least very few, fresh veins can be found; the result of which is that not so much silver, by a long way, can be produced as forty or fifty years ago, and consequently the ruined mint cannot recover its former status.'[1] Mine-owners and directors of mints spoke as follows: 'It is known to everybody in what a parlous condition the mines all over Germany are at present, so that a silver mark costs twice or three times as much as formerly. If, therefore, coins were struck of the same weight and value as of old when silver could be obtained at much less cost, the expense would be greater than the profit, and the mines would have to be left unworked. As, however, it is better to get a little than to get nothing, debasement of coinage, which is the only way out of the difficulty, should not be forbidden.'[2] 'Not before it is time,' says a Mint Report of the Upper Rhine Circle of 1607, 'it is being perceived that the mines are exhausted and do not yield anything like their former produce, notwithstanding which the expenses of working them have increased in every way during the last half-

[1] Hirsch, iii. 28, 30. Sattler, v. *Beilagen*, p. 97 ff.

[2] Quoted in Paul Welser's *Politischer Discurs vom Münzwesen* (1601) in Hirsch, iii. 177.

century, have indeed become half as much again.'[1] It was also pointed out by Zacharias Geizkofler in the same year that 'the mining industry in all parts of Germany was at a very low ebb; the cost of raising the ore from great depths and poor veins, as well as the men's wages, and all the necessary materials and victuals have risen in price by half or even more.'[2] Nuremberg merchants, in the following year, drew attention to the 'great decline in the Tyrolese, Saxon and Mansfeld mines.'[3]

As early as 1526 delegates of the Elector of Saxony and the Counts of Mansfeld complained at a Mint Diet that 'at the present time the mines were in a condition more retrograde than progressive.'[4] When George Agricola in 1546 described the wealth of the old silver mines of Freiberg, Annaberg, Schneeberg, and Geyer, where silver was found in massive quantities,[5] the most productive times, when, for instance, the Annaberg silver ore within nine years (1496–1505) amounted to about 400,000 gulden,[6] had long since gone by. After 1559 the expenditure at Annaberg during several years exceeded its receipts.[7] At Schneeberg, where in 1581 over 21,000 thalers, and in 1582 over 11,000 thalers, were distributed among the companies the yield of 531 marks of silver in 1593 fell to 306 marks in 1594, to 140 marks 9 lot in 1598,

[1] Hirsch, iii. 345. [2] *Ibid.* 292. [3] *Ibid.* ii. 350.

[4] Newald, *Österr. Münzwesen unter Ferdinand I.*, p. 11.

[5] Falke, *Kurfürst August*, 177.

[6] See our remarks, vol. ii. p. 39 f.

[7] Falke, *Kurfürst August*, 171. ** Cf. *Mitteilungen des Freiberger Altertumsvereins*, 35 (Freiberg in Saxony, 1899), 57 ff.

and to 83 marks 12 lot in 1599.[1] In the Oberharz seventeen silver mines were worked, which from 1539 for about ten years yielded a certain amount of produce; after that time, however, silver mining went rapidly backwards.[2] The Mansfeld slate quarry, which for a time had yielded 18,000 cwts. of copper yearly, sank to such an extent that out of seventeen smelting houses scarcely seven still remained.[3] In the margraviate of Ansbach-Bayreuth the yield of the mines at Goldkronach was once estimated at 1500 gold guldens a week;[4] in 1586 the expenses of the mine were 5000 fl., while the output was only 500 fl.; in the Dürrenwaid it was complained that 9000 fl. had been spent, and only 33 fl. silver produced; in forty-four years, against a yearly gain of 825 fl., 2778 fl. had been expended, not reckoning the pay of the mining officials;[5] an overseer of mines at Jägerndorf, giving his opinion in 1599 on the Bavarian mines, said that in the process of smelting metal, coals, wood and time were wasted by all the artificial and alchemical means employed; alchemy had unfortunately gained too much head among the mining people; there were more mining officials than workers.[6] In Würtemburg, also, the expenses of mining were generally greater than the receipts.[7] In Switzerland, at a session of a Diet in 1585, it was stated that 'to mint coinage of equal value to the imperial coinage was not only very difficult,

[1] Fischer, iv. 238–239.

[2] *Zeitschr. des Harzvereins*, xvii. 14.

[3] Köhler, xvi. 1. Concerning the decline of the mine Harzgerode, see Köhler, xiv. 300 ff.

[4] Fischer, iv. 236.

[5] Lang, iii. 241, 253, 255.

[6] *Ibid.* 251.

[7] Fischer, iv. 239.

but quite impossible, owing to the dearth of silver, for the mines that had been available in the country in former years had all, or most of them, been worked out.'[1]

The mines that were in the worst state of collapse were those in the Tyrol which had formerly yielded such enormous produce. Foreign trading associations, especially those of Augsburg, had long subjected these mines to a most wasteful and oppressive exploitation. For instance, in the years 1511–1517 the association of the Höchstetters had possessed themselves, from the mines at Schwaz, of no less than 149,770 marks of refined silver and 52,915 cwts. of copper. The Fuggers, in 1519, obtained from mines at this same place, given to them in mortgage, 200,000 gulden annually.[2] Other important trading houses and associations, such as the Brothers George and Sebastian Andorfer, the Tänzels, the Hofers, and so forth, also amassed prodigious profits at Schwaz for a long time.[3] The decline was so remarkable that, for instance, the profits reaped by the Fuggers, 13 per cent. on the capital in 1549, in 1555 had sunk to not more than 3½ per cent.[4]

Several of the foreign trading associations, which had got the whole mining industry into their own hands, became bankrupt: *Starben und verdarben* (they died and were ruined), as the Treasury put it, on mining.[5] Whereas in former days the territorial government had received annually 40,000 marks and more in silver, Archduke Ferdinand II., in 1569, found himself

[1] Hirsch, ii. 324–325. [2] Greiff, 94. [3] Peetz, 46, 49.
[4] *Zeitschr. des histor. Vereins für Schwaben und Neuburg*, ix. 210.
[5] Hirn, i. 548–550. Peetz, 153.

compelled for a matter of 2000 marks owed to his brother, the Emperor Maximilian II., to beg for an extended term of credit.[1] Mining operations, he wrote to his brother in 1570, became more costly every year; in many of his mines he had already renounced socage and tithes, he gave gratuities and aids out of his other chamber-revenues, and still numbers of his mines had fallen in, while the costs of working them were higher than the gains.[2] The silver and copper mine discovered at Röhrerbühel in 1539 yielded in 1552 over 22,000 marks in silver alone; in the reign of Ferdinand II. it only yielded 7000–8000 marks; the Falkenstein mine near Schwaz, which had formerly supplied the territorial prince's treasury with a yearly average sum of 20,000 gulden clear profit, in 1564 produced only 15,000; in 1572 only 7000 gulden.[3] One after another of the mining companies withdrew; instead of twenty there now remained only four, and these latter, in the years 1557 and 1558, suffered a loss of 30,000 gulden.

'Most of the veins and the finest ones, which had formerly existed everywhere in large numbers, were now,' they complained, 'altogether or almost worked out, and nothing substantial could now be dug out of them as had been done formerly: this was, perhaps, the consequence of their sins and a punishment from

[1] Hirn, i. 555.

[2] v. Sperges, 111–126. Newald, *Österr. Münzwesen unter Maximilian II.*, &c., p. 20; cf. 23.

[3] v. Sperges, 120. Hirn, i. 540, 543–544. Peetz, 49. Cf. A. Schlossar, 'Von verschollenen Tiroler Bergwerken,' in the *Beilage zur Münchener Allgem. Zeitung*, 1884, Nos. 106, 209; 1886, Nos. 313, 314. ** And Iser-Gaudenthurm, 143 ff.

God.'[1] In the main it was the result of the long course of depredation in working only the best veins that now no longer brought in anything. 'Most disastrous also' was the calamity at Rattenberg on the Geyer. In this place where, from 1588 to 1595, 498,733 stars of silver and copper ore (the star reckoned at 108–110 pounds) had been extracted, the yield sank in the years 1612–1619 to 177,784 stars of copper; in 1619 only 4–5 lots of silver was obtained from 1 cwt. of ore, and finally, only 2 lots.[2]

Much more considerable was the decline of the Bohemian mines.

The Kuttenberg mine, in 1523, had still yielded far above 13,000 marks to the Mint; in 1542 it had sunk to such a degree that it required a weekly outlay of 600 fl. while it brought nothing in. Under Maximilian II. it brought only, on an average, 26,000 gulden into the imperial treasury. In 1616 it was stated by the chief mint-master and other reliable witnesses that, during the last ten years, a loss of 805,368 Meissen Schocks had been sustained on the mining operations at Kuttenberg.[3] In Joachimsthal, in the years 1550–1560, the annual clear profits had amounted to 40,000–60,000 thalers, but they fell gradually to 12,000 thalers; in 1590 they were not more than 6837, in 1599 only 2354, in 1616 only 1806 thalers.[4] This once so populous city sank into abject poverty.[5] The committees of inquiry instituted under the Emperor Matthias every

[1] *Zeitschr. des histor. Vereins für Schwaben und Neuburg*, ix. 210–211.

[2] v. Sperges, 127. Peetz, 159.

[3] Gmelin, 90. Fischer, ii. 674. Mosch, i. 178–179. Newald, *Österr. Münzwesen unter Maximilian II.*, &c., pp. 217–218.

[4] Gmelin, 100–102. Fischer, iv. 234–235.

[5] Mosch, i. 340.

two or three years for the purpose of investigating the causes of the continually increasing decline of mines, and of smoothing down the frequent dissensions of the officials amongst each other and with outsiders, had no result. 'The disgraceful bickering, quarrelling, hatred, and envy,' it says in one of their reports, 'which go on among the officials, have been hitherto the reason why both Germans and foreigners have lost all taste for mining operations, and the mines have been brought to complete ruin.' [1]

Almost in all districts where mining operations went on, complaints were rife concerning the inefficiency or the fraudulence of the mine officials.

In Saxony in the years 1536, 1554, 1568 and 1589, stringent ordinances for mining works were issued, but with regard to the execution of these ordinances we read in a pamphlet: 'All the underhandedness and wrongdoing that go on in the mining works, and how the blessing of God is driven away by force, are, alas, open as the day.' 'It was above all necessary,' this pamphlet said, 'that there should be a thorough examination into the affairs of the mines, and that the revenues should be accurately tested, the expenses properly calculated, the iniquitous cheatings of the miners and the officials punished and stopped, and things put on a better footing than had existed hitherto, in order

[1] Newald, 220. Concerning the inadequateness and inferiority of the mine officials in Silesia, see Steinbeck, i. 238–239. The Silesian master of mines, Hans Unger (1597), could neither read nor write, and yet the Silesian treasury recommended him to the imperial court treasury at Vienna for a post. The pay of such mint-masters was also a sorry matter, as well as their outward position. Hence incessant complaints from them concerning their own poverty, constant fault-finding with the officials, and distrust of the company.

that all those things which were so criminal before God, and which certainly were largely the reason why the blessing which formerly attended the mines no longer fell so richly, should be henceforth given up, that strangers should be enticed to co-operation and attracted into the country, the great treasures still hidden in the earth be discovered, and those already discovered, be put to the proper use. The mining people flatter themselves that they have more understanding of mines than anybody else; but they are very greatly deceived, for they always come upon people elsewhere who are able to give them information about great things hitherto unknown. However, this beautiful jealousy has grown to such notorious dimensions that whenever anybody has appeared who had fresh light and instruction to offer concerning mining matters, such an one has been laughed at as a conceited blockhead, and his proposals so calumniated at the Treasury, that he has been obliged to withdraw in great disgrace, or else he has been so hampered and thwarted in every way that he has had no alternative but to succumb and withdraw.'[1]

In Hesse the Committee of Mines of the Margrave Moritz, composed chiefly of foreigners, squandered considerable sums, and enriched itself at the expense of the country; at last complete bankruptcy ensued. The Director of the Mines, George Stange, on whom the blame of this bankruptcy fell, defended himself in 1618, in a letter to the Chancellor and the councillors: 'Under such management,' he said, 'when nobody knew who was cook and who was scullion, the mining operations could not possibly go on; all the stored ore

[1] Richard, 252–253.

was melted down at Iba, and copper was produced at a loss, what came out of the mine was put back into it again, so that there was no longer any trade . . . the managers at Iba and Richelsdorf kicked up a shindy; in Richelsdorf the former contractor, John Drachstädt, wasted 50,000 gulden on buildings.'[1]

Among the 'twelve principal reasons why numbers of important mines had gone to ruin and become reduced to swamps,' the Brunswick councillor of mines, George Engelhart Löhneiss, who had observed much disorder and many abuses, mentioned in the first place, in a work dedicated to Duke Frederick Ulrich, that: 'The mines are worked and officered by lazy, drunken, insolent, low people, who have no understanding of mining work and are unable to direct the mining operations.

'Another cause,' he said, 'is that the rulers of the land paid so little for the metals, such as silver, lead, copper, and so forth, and in addition took the ninth or the tenth part for themselves, and did not contribute anything to the heavy expenses, either in gratuities or in remission of charges, and did not consider that all the items such as wood, coals, carriage, tallow-candles, iron, leather, provisions, and labour, involved in the working of a mine, had risen enormously in price, and that all privileges and ordinances were disregarded.

'For these reasons the men no longer take any interest in working at the mines, they become negligent, abuse and rail at the mines, say it 's all nothing but fraud and self-interest, and thus many are frightened away, &c., &c.'

'Again, not the least of the reasons is that the

[1] Rommel, *Neuere Geschichte von Hessen*, ii. 676–677.

corporation is not careful to see that the workmen are paid punctually and with good coins, or else that these coins have risen so highly in value that they lose several groschen on them, also that instead of being paid in coin they have to accept from the foremen and officials corn and so forth at the dearest prices, and have to drink the beer they brew themselves.'[1]

A very great and special grievance among the miners was the introduction in many of the mines of a longer shift, that is, a longer day's work.

According to the old German mining laws the shift was commonly fixed at eight hours a day, and this time was very seldom extended.[2] In 1553 Ferdinand I. renewed for Austria the edict issued by the Emperor Maximilian I., in which it is enjoined that: 'Each worker shall, according to traditional usage, each day before and after noon, except on Sundays and on Saturday afternoons, work for half a shift (four hours).' 'In the high mines round Schlaming, Villach, Steinfeld, Gross-Kirchheim and Kätzthal, where the workmen take their food with them and are obliged to remain up in the heights for fourteen days,' he adds, 'they shall only do four shifts, reckoned at ten hours each, and they shall be paid for the two weeks at the rate of three weeks.'[3] According to the Bavarian and Salzburg

[1] *Gründlicher und ausführlicher Bericht von Bergwerken*, &c. (Leipzig edition, 1690), pp. 49–50.

[2] See our remarks, vol. ii. 73 ff. ** According to the researches of Neuberg, *Gosler's Bergbau bis* 1552 (Hanover 1892), p. 230, the day's work in the renowned Rammelberg mines was, down to 1476, limited to six hours; in this year, however, an eight hours' shift was established; but in 1544 the legitimate shift of seven hours was restored; whether this change came about through the agency of the journeymen unions, and whether it had any socio-political significance is not evident.

[3] Bucholtz, *Gesch. der Regierung Ferdinand des Ersten*, viii. 244.

mine ordinances also, the day's work was eight hours, and the number of working days in the year amounted to 260.[1]

In later times, however, in numbers of mines the working day was extended to twelve hours with one hour's pause; for instance, in the Nassau-Katzenelnbogen mine regulations of 1559, and in the Brunswick regulations of 1593.[2] 'When the bell has rung,' writes Löhneiss respecting North German mines, 'the workmen at the stroke of four must go to the mines and stay there till eleven o'clock in the morning, when they will be rung off by the foreman, and then again rung

[1] Peetz, xx. 166–192. The Salzburg Archbishop Matthias Lang in a mine ordinance of the year 1532 alludes also to this old tradition: 'In our diocese and land, in the lower mines, the hours of work shall everywhere be 5½ shifts for one week, and eight full hours to the shift: four hours before noon and four hours after noon, up to Saturday, when every workman, who has worked the four hours before noon, may stop work. And if two whole holidays occur in the week, the wages shall be kept back for only one day, but the men shall be expected to work all the more industriously on the other days so as to make up for lost time. But in the upper mines where the workmen take their food with them and have to stay the whole week, there shall only be four shifts to the week, but ten hours to the shift.' Lori, 217–218, § 27. Likewise Elector Frederick II. of the Palatinate, in an Upper Palatine mine ordinance of 1548, enjoined that 'Work shall be continued for eight full hours, and until the foreman rings the bell the men shall not leave the place.' Lori, 259, § 115. For the mines in Silesia the regulations were: 'The workmen work for three seven-hour shifts, with an hour between shifts going and coming back. In the night-shift from eight o'clock in the evening to three o'clock in the morning, they only work in case of necessity, and then the workmen cheer and enliven each other with singing. *Double shifts are not allowed.* As on Sundays and festivals work is suspended, so too on Saturday no work is to be done, in order that the workpeople may have time to buy their provisions. In case of necessity, for instance if there is an inflow of water, or danger of the sides falling in, and so forth, exceptions may be made.' Steinbeck, i. 209. Six- and seven-hour shifts were the rule in many mines; see Achenbach in the *Zeitschr. für Bergrecht*, xii. 110, note, and Achenbach, *Gemeines deutsches Bergrecht*, 290.

[2] Achenbach in the *Zeitschr. für Bergrecht*, xii. 110–111, note.

back at twelve o'clock. The hour from eleven to twelve is called the free hour for eating and resting. But as soon as it has struck twelve each one must go back into the mine to his work and remain there till four in the afternoon, and that is the day-shift. Then another bell will be rung for the night-shift men to begin. These also have a free hour from seven to eight in the evening, and they must remain at work till three in the morning: and so on and so on from one shift to the other. These are called the twelve-hour shifts, and they are suspended on Sundays and feast days of obligations.' If under special stress of circumstances 'in order that the workmen might be able to hold out,' shifts of only six to eight hours were allowed, the men were obliged to make up for it by working also on the holidays: the hammer and crowbar had to pass from the outgoing to the incoming miner without stoppage of work. The shifts of the carpenters, masons, pit-diggers and other day labourers, lasted in summer from four in the morning till five in the afternoon, and in the winter from five till four.[1]

The wages of the miners were meted out very sparely. 'Experience shows,' says Löhneiss, 'that most of the workers in mines had nothing more than what they earned weekly by the dour toil of their hands, work through which they often sustained injury and loss of health, became lame or cripples for life, or indeed lost their very lives, leaving sickly, uneducated children behind them.' Here let it be said that every workman was obliged to give two pfennigs a week to the journeymen's fund, from which fund when he was disabled from

[1] *Gründlicher und ausführlicher Bericht* (see above, p. 100, n. 1), pp. 241 243.

work, or his family were in want after his death, they received the weekly sum of 6–10 groschen; this, however, was not much help to them. 'It was therefore to be hoped that whereas most of the mining people were impecunious and poor, the rulers would show themselves benevolent and kind towards the sick and wounded.'[1] Duke Julius of Brunswick, who boasted in 1576 that he had raised the yearly profits of his mines in the Harz by 84,000 gulden higher than his father had done, paid the workmen so badly that in 1578 he wrote to the Landgrave William of Hesse: 'They are obliged to content themselves with convent fare, i.e. small beer and water, because they get low wages.'[2]

While the price of provisions rose continually, the workmen were kept at 'their old wages.' Thus, for instance, it says in a Schwaz chronicle: 'After a year of plague (1565) prices had almost doubled as compared with former years, but the wages of the poor miners were not raised: at the present time they cannot even earn a blessed loaf of bread; they drag on in direst poverty.'[3]

At the same time, as Löhneiss justly points out in his

[1] p. 46.

[2] Bodemann, 200–201, 207.

[3] Hirn, i. 557. 'Towards the end of the sixteenth century the owners of the mines actually went on the plan of diminishing the workmen's wages. The way in which this was done, at Hammereisenbach in the Schwarzwald, for instance, was not only to pay less for the work, but to load the men with greater burdens and expenses. Before 1594 a workman received nine kreuzer out of the bucket of hewn black ore, and two batzen for red ore; this pay was lessened by one kreuzer on each bucket. Formerly the cost of working the mines, the digging and tunnelling, together with the machinery and repairs, was defrayed by the owners; but later on the expenses were charged to the miners, who thus—not to mention other losses—had their time for paid piece-work considerably reduced.' Mone in the *Zeitschr. für die Gesch. des Oberrheins*, xii. 388–389.

'Reasons for the Decline of Mines,' the workmen were made to pay the highest prices for the necessaries of life. This was especially the case when the mines were in the hands of money-grabbing trading societies. It was calculated in 1556, by the Treasury of the territorial prince at Innsbruck, that the mining companies by their consignments of corn to the workmen had reaped a profit of 20,000 gulden. In vain did Archduke Ferdinand II. represent to the owners that they ought to have regard for the poor workmen and sell them corn at a moderate price. When the proprietors of the mine also took the baking trade into their hands, the workmen had to complain that the loaves were too small, and also that damaged goods were sold to them, and that oatmeal was actually mixed with the flour. 'It is strange,' the Treasury remarked to the companies, 'that you gentlemen of such high and honourable standing and traditions should make such a to-do with your bread-baking and bring on yourselves such odium.'[1]

When in the years 1562–1565, and again in 1571, infectious diseases broke out among the mining circles of the Unterinntal, occasioning great distress and poverty, the companies troubled themselves no whit about the sufferers; Archduke Ferdinand, on the other hand, displayed the oft-praised 'generous trait of the Austrian blood' by giving unlimited plenary power to spend charitable gifts and to advance money to sick families, 'even if some disadvantage should ensue,' that is to say, they were not to count on being paid back.[2]

[1] Hirn, i. 557–558. [2] *Ibid.* 556.

The resentment of the workmen in the mining districts at the lengthening of the working hours and the raising of prices often culminated in fierce outbreaks of defiance taking the shape of strikes, or of dangerous riots.[1] On the occasion of a riot on the Röhrenbühel in 1567, the delegates of the petitioners represented to the Emperor that 'they were obliged to work for eight hours on a stretch, and that mining operations were very dangerous; during the last twenty-six years 700 workmen had succumbed through explosions; food was up at starvation prices; cheese for instance was sold by the company to the people for double the price they themselves gave for it; as the time spent in coming and going to their work was not taken into account the depth of the mines made the shifts much too long; for piece-work also they were paid much too little.'

The archducal commissioner entrusted with the business of examining into these grievances said that 'the agitation had been chiefly got up by people who had the smallest deposits in the funds of the corporation and who were most largely in debt to them, but that the complaints about high prices and the length of working-hours were justifiable.' The Archduke addressed a grave letter of admonition to the mine-owners and brought the eight-hour shift down to six hours.[2]

How justified the complaints of low wages were,

[1] Concerning a rising at Schwaz in 1525, cf. v. Sperges, 252, 253. ** Concerning strikes in the same place in the years 1548 and 1583, cf. Iser-Gaudenthurm, 164 ff. Concerning journeymen riots in Schwaz since 1589, see *Zeitschr. des Innsbrucker Ferdinandeums*, 1899, p. 127 ff:, where also there are fuller details about the bad behaviour of the Fuggers to their miners; see especially p. 157 ff.

[2] *Beiträge zur Geschichte, Statistik, Naturkunde und Kunst von Tirol und Vorarlberg*, i. 257. Hirn, i. 560.

and how great was the poverty and distress of the workmen, is shown by a government report of 1571; while the usual price of a star of rye in the mining districts was 50 kreuzer, a workman earned barely one gulden a week. An ore-sifter received 24 kreuzer a week, a barrow-man 30 kreuzer, a windlass-man 36–48, a hewer 45 kreuzer. 'For such pay,' wrote the Treasury in 1575, 'one would not care even to climb the mountains. Verily these people are poorer than beggars.'[1]

Industrial and agricultural day-labourers were in equally evil plight throughout the sixteenth century.

[1] Hirn, i. 559 ff., where there are fuller details about riots and agitation.

## CHAPTER III

### INDUSTRIAL TRADES

TRADE and industry, which had been highly flourishing in the fifteenth century, in the sixteenth century fell decade after decade into worse conditions owing to the religious, political, and social unrest, the civil wars, the ever-increasing decay of commerce, the perpetual multiplication of taxes, and the growing insecurity of business resulting from the rotten condition of the Mint and the exhaustion of the mines.' [1]

The more the burgher-class declined from its former proud height, the narrower and pettier did the guild

[1] Concerning the economic decline in the sixteenth century Schanz (*Gesellenverbände*, 134) says: 'Commerce, which is the mainspring of industry, was a thing of the past, the export of German products into foreign markets had been made impossible by the numberless territorial taxes and tolls. German industry was thus thrown back almost entirely on the home market, in other words on the open country. Agriculture, completely paralysed, only yielded to a few ground lords a respectable income, for the great bulk of the peasantry it could not supply a decent livelihood. The latter were quite unable to buy the majority of articles fitted for export, and the unequal distribution of incomes now struck a heavy blow at home industrial produce.' ** 'German industrial labour,' writes Grupp (*Geldwirtschaft*, 293), 'went more and more backwards, municipal culture declined, and a natural-economical reaction set in. The causes of this, apart from the intellectual and religious fightings and warfare, which created a disposition unfavourable to practical effort, lay in the inordinate craze for speculation which was connected with the beginnings of money industry. Honourable labour was either despised or exploited. Wages sank, while the prices of commodities rose.'

spirit become in the different towns. Each town strove to exclude all the others from all competition in industries, and almost each one was paralysed by endless guild disputes and quarrels which were fought out within its walls. The existing trade regulations fell into a state of torpor. The guilds, which had been called into existence to protect labour and enable it to become profitable, now revoltingly violated the rights of remunerative work, and forfeiting their original character—in the best sense of the word *democratic*—they degenerated little by little into a caste aristocracy, into regular monopolies. They transformed themselves, as far as possible, into societies for befriending and enriching a definite number of master families who aimed at ruling and exploiting the money market to the exclusion of all the other members. For this purpose the number of masters was diminished, and it was made so difficult to journeymen to attain to mastership, that almost only the sons of masters, or men who had married the widows or daughters of masters, could achieve an independent position. At any rate the free attainment of mastership was burdened with the most hampering conditions. Now it was decreed that the candidates must have spent their time of apprenticeship—not seldom extending over five or six years—in the town in question; now it was required that during this time they should only have worked for a definite number of masters, now that they should have been born on the very spot.

The master tailors at Constance demanded of the council in 1584 that 'only those who after their apprenticeship had served another ten years at the handicraft should be eligible for mastership.' Many of the guilds

would only admit to the rights of mastership men who had 'master-houses' or shops of their own.[1] The test for mastership ('the master-piece') was made more and more difficult and expensive. In Esslingen, for instance, the Tailors' Guild in 1557 insisted on the making of a whole wardrobe, which among other articles was to include a coat, hose, doublet, cap and mourning cloak for a nobleman, an embroidered cloak for a noblewoman, a purple cloak and damask doublet for a burgher, a shamlot cut-away cloak and an 'Augustinian' of satin for an unmarried daughter, a long cloak of shamlot for a doctor, and so forth. Not seldom the guilds required as tests for mastership the execution of all sorts of difficult and rare pieces of work, which nobody would ever want to buy, and which would only serve as spectacular curiosities to be kept in the houses of the masters. Besides all this, successful candidates had so many costs to defray on investiture, so much to pay the masters for food and drink, that needy journeymen were obliged at the outset to renounce all thoughts of competition.[2]

'Guilds and master-pieces,' said the Bavarian provincial ordinance of 1553, 'were originally instituted to secure the maintenance of good order and respectability and as a safeguard against the admission to mastership of any who were not noted for good conduct and for skill and experience in their work.' But this old and laudable tradition 'is now grievously abused by the hand-workers all over the land: they have adopted the

[1] Schanz, 132–133. Concerning the introduction of the six years' apprenticeship in the lace-making and leather industries at Nuremberg and other towns after 1531, see Schönlank, 371 ff.

[2] See L. Wassermann, *Das Meisterstrück in der Alten und Neuen Welt*, Jahrg. 19 (Einsiedeln, 1885), pp. 717–719.

plan of insisting that those who wish to become masters shall be burdened not only with immoderate taxation and expense, but also with the task of making unnecessary and useless "master-pieces," so that men who by their skill and proficiency are fitted for mastership, are excluded from it and made objects of scorn if they cannot meet the unreasonable costs imposed on them, or execute these difficult and useless "master-pieces."'[1]

The sons of many of the hand-workers, although of honourable descent and blameless conduct, were altogether denied entrance to the guilds. The imperial police, accordingly, in 1548 found it necessary to issue the injunction that 'the linen weavers, barbers, coopers, millers, tax-gatherers, pipers, trumpeters, and those whose parents and children are honest and well-behaved should henceforth by no means be excluded from guilds, corporations, and offices, but should be admitted to them like other honourable artisans.'[2]

At Görlitz, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Guild of Shoemakers once refused to admit a young man to apprenticeship in the trade because his father and grandfather had been millers, and he was therefore to be looked on as a miller; the butchers of this place rejected a butcher who sought admittance, because his stepfather was a potter.[3]

The Recess of the Augsburg Diet of 1594 mentioned as special abuses of the guild system that 'in some of

[1] *Bayerische Landesordnung*, fol. 126$^{b}$–128. See below, p. 115 f., the remarks of Duke Christopher of Würtemberg in 1567.

[2] *Ordnung und Reformation guter Policey, aufgerichtet auf dem Reichstag zu Augsburg* 1548, in the *Neue Sammlung der Reichsabschiede*, ii. 605.

[3] The Court of Sheriffs at Magdeburg declared itself against the presumption of both these guilds; cf. Th. Neumann, *Magdeburger Weistümer*, 195–202.

the towns the masters of crafts form new corporations and make it a rule that an apprentice must go on learning for another three or four years, and they actually presume to find fault with old-established masters of crafts in other towns, men who learnt their business thoroughly well years before, according to the original guild rules, earned their mastership and carried on their trade peacefully for a long time without any interference from anyone; and they abuse and discharge their journeymen, who learnt under them before the existence of the new corporations and rules, and compel them either to go elsewhere and learn their trade over again, or else to submit to punishment. Further, in many places the masters have the impudence to refuse to work for a client who has had work done for him by another master, albeit he has duly paid for the work. The workmen, moreover, rise against the masters; they lock out other employés and so deprive trades in town and country of the necessary hands.' [1]

In consequence of the numerous abuses continually cropping up, the former independence and judicial powers of the guilds were more and more restricted by the State authorities. The imperial police ordinance of 1530 had still left the judgment respecting quarrels among the hand-workers to the interested guilds; the ordinance of 1577, however, decided that all matters whatever belonging to handicrafts were to be referred to the magistracy.[2] In Vienna, Ferdinand I., in an

[1] *Neue Sammlung der Reichsabschiede*, iii. 442.

[2] *Neue Sammlung der Reichsabschiede*, ii. 345, and iii. 398. The writer on national economy, Christopher Besold, recommended giving the guilds autonomy over all their own affairs, in so far as these were not in opposition to the laws of the State or to good morals. Contracts for monopolising goods, for keeping up prices, for limiting purchasers in

handicrafts' ordinance issued in 1527 in conjunction with the Committee of Estates of his hereditary lands, and renewed in 1552, had already abolished the corporations and guilds with all their 'self-made statutes, ordinances, &c.' No handicraft was to organise a general company or meeting without the knowledge and consent of the burgomaster and council; everything must be subject to magisterial oversight.[1]

Thus the independent existence of the guilds was struck at the roots. But State interference was necessary for the protection of those who bought and used the goods, because very often the honesty of the producers of goods could no longer be depended on.[2] Thus, for instance, in 1563 the Nuremberg Council discovered that the greater number of the master glaziers often used bad Bohemian window glass instead of good Venetian ware, not only for new work, but for daily mending and repairing, charging the same as for Venetian glass. The joiners had to be forbidden 'to paste painted paper over worm-eaten wood, thus producing sham new work.' In view of 'obvious danger and deceit' the whole body of working goldsmiths were forbidden in 1562 'to silver-plate brass and copper beakers.'[3]

With the incessant quarrels that went on between the different guilds the magistrates had enough to do. From fear of too strong competition the guilds

their free choice among the guild-masters, drinking away the money fines which ought to flow into the poor-box, these things were not to be allowed them. See Roscher, *Deutsche Nationalökonomik an der Grenzscheide*, 322.

[1] Bucholtz, *Ferdinand der Erste*, viii. 263 ff.

[2] Cf. A. Bruder in the *Zeitschr. für die gesammte Staatswissenschaft*, xxxvi. 486.

[3] Stockbauer, x. 15, 16.

divided the various works more and more sparingly and anxiously amongst each other, prescribed in each case with the utmost exactness what the men were to work at and how much they were to do, and watched with suspicious eyes lest any act of overreaching should come up for reproof. Even masters of closely related trades were prevented from exceeding the regulation limits of production. Whenever cases occurred of violation of this rule of the corporation, endless bickering, complaining, and mutual recrimination were almost sure to follow. At Strasburg, for instance, a ten years' quarrel went on after 1507 between the clothmakers and the clothshearers over the right of using certain colours. In 1522 the clothmakers at Strasburg were accused by the fullers of having encroached improperly on their privileges. Still less did the non-related guilds spare each other. Now the tradesmen and shopkeepers complained of the clothiers for manufacturing knitted hose and gloves, now the clothmakers fell foul of the dealers in old clothes and the drapers because they also traded in a new kind of serge, a soft woollen material, which they (the clothmakers) could not prepare, and so interfered with the market of the clothiers and weavers; next, the hatters were to blame for interference of this sort. Envy and suspicion gave rise to endless lawsuits, especially after the end of the sixteenth century. Scarcely was one disposed of than another began; not unfrequently several were going on side by side, as well as those which guild journeymen brought against each other or against their guilds.[1]

[1] Fuller details are given in W. Stieda, 'Zunfthändel im sechzehnten Jahrhundert,' in the *Histor. Taschenbuch*, Folge vi. Jahrg. iv. 307–352. 'The causes of the lawsuits were usually unimportant and the result of the

When the woollen drapers at Salza in Saxony, who, according to an agreement with the clothmakers of that place, might only display their foreign cloths in half their breadth, spread them out in their full width, the clothmakers feared that this would lead to the ruin of their trade. The whole guild, consisting of 200 masters, appeared in 1558 before the Elector Augustus, who was travelling through the town, and did public homage to him, in order to procure the abolition of this grievance, so that 'their trade might not be reduced to beggary.'[1]

This 'cancerous disease,' for such the guild system had now become, attacked also the public service of the streets; like the handicraftsmen, messengers and carriers began to regard themselves as associations with unimpeachable privileges.[2]

Any member of a guild who invented a better instrument, by means of which quicker and cheaper work could be done, fell a victim to the jealousy of his brother-members, who managed with the help of the magistracy to protect themselves against the use of such new-fangled tools. Thus by magisterial command technical progress was summarily arrested.

infinity of ordinances which multiplied beyond measure, and the strict observance of which in all their particulars was a sheer impossibility. Wherever the lawsuits are concerned with the admission of new members, the grossest egotism is displayed. The long duration of the quarrels, the prolixity and discursiveness of the letters of complaint and defence made these disputes seem intolerable.' 'In these quarrellings we detect one of the reasons of the decline of the once flourishing and highly respected institution of guilds.' 'Whoever follows attentively this "beginning of the end," will see plainly that the two following centuries were bound to carry the guild-system further and further along the line of descent' (pp. 351, 352).

[1] Falke, *Kurfürst August*, 239.

[2] A. Flegler, *Zur Gesch. der Posten*, 31.

Even at Nuremberg in 1572 a master of the thimble trade 'who had invented and used a new kind of turning-wheel, greatly to his own and his trade's advantage, but to the disadvantage of the other masters, was, on the complaints of these masters, forbidden by the magistrates, under pain of severe punishment, to use this wheel any more.' Likewise a master of the pinmakers' guild who had invented a new kind of polishing tool was ordered in 1585, under penalty of a fine of 50 fl., 'to put it away at once, not to use it any more, still less to teach the use of it at home or abroad.' [1]

Everywhere it was complained that the masters of handicrafts, to the great injury of purchasers, by union and association, fixed the prices of their goods, raised them as they liked, and punished those members of their guilds who worked or sold at cheaper rates. 'We know from positive experience,' says an imperial police ordinance of 1577, 'that the hand-workers in their guilds, or otherwise sometimes, combine and agree together that no one of them is to sell the articles he has made at a cheaper rate than the others, thus causing a rise in prices, and obliging those who want to buy these said articles to pay whatever the guilds have agreed upon.' [2]

'Some years ago,' said Duke Christopher of Würtemberg on October 31, 1567, 'an ordinance was issued for the tailors' trade at Stuttgart, in the hopes that this ordinance would be fruitful of good to the community at large and also to the trade, but the tailors abused it shamefully. They agreed together that

[1] Stockbauer, 39. [2] *Neue Sammlung der Reichsabschiede*, iii. 397.

henceforth none of them should work for the burghers in their own houses; also, in some places, that a tailor should only work in his own village where he lived, and not in other villages or places; and thus our subjects have been debarred from employing many capable tailors whom they may happen to like. Also, they settled among themselves what each one is to be paid for his work, and that no member is to take less, and if any one should do so, he is to be punished. Accordingly it happened at Lorch that a poor tailor was fined 10 schillings in punishment for having made plain hose for two kreuzer, and for not doubling the price; likewise for having taken an apprentice for two gulden, which he was told was much too little: he ought to have charged him twelve or fourteen gulden.' Since the 'agreement' in question wages had risen to nearly half as much again.[1]

To escape the extortion of the guilds, many towns broke through the old guild restrictions. Thus the council of Ulm took great pains to encourage competition between foreign weavers and those of Ulm. In Augsburg, Stuttgart, Tübingen, free butchers' stalls were set up with a notice that 'here every butcher, even though he did not belong to the town guild, might sell meat.'[2] At a Bavarian Provincial Diet in 1608 it was decreed that, 'in Munich, not only should free stalls be started, but that cattle should be bought and cut up without the intervention of the butchers.'

This Diet was moreover made the occasion for discussing all sorts of defects and abuses in the guild system, and measures were proposed for

[1] Reyscher, xii. 345–346.

[2] Schmoller, *Nationalökonomische Ansichten*, 524.

remedying the palpably decadent condition of industrial trade.

Amongst these suggestions were the following: 'Whereas there is a dearth of skilful workmen, everything turns on providing the necessary number of skilled and experienced artisans. Foreign skilled masters must also be countenanced. The children of the poor must be helped in learning some trade; this might be done by the erection of a seminary for hand-workers. Special resistance must be offered to the so-called "Knüttelbünde," the secret clubs formed among the hand-workers for advancing prices. Most of the ordinances for hand-workers, ratified by the authorities, require revision; this should be set about without delay.' The Munich industrial deputy insisted among other things that 'the poorer industries should be given a helping hand; these were kept down by a few rich handicraftsmen.' Among the many hindrances to the prosperity both of industry and commerce were: the maintenance by alms of idlers who were capable of work, the exploitation of the land by forestallers and hawkers, the craze for dressing in foreign fabrics, the falsification of the coinage, the extensive export of raw inland materials, and last, but not least, the forcing of young people into learned professions, official life, and court service. 'Excessive study was a hindrance to industrial work. When a man had acquired a little learning he became ashamed of his position; his son must study in order to better himself. If, then, the son spends all his time in study, without coming *ad gradum*, he is unfit for a trade, aspires to court service, or to an office or higher post, stakes his fortune on it, and remains a poor journeyman, whereas he

might have been a wealthy tradesman. And so all the handicrafts and all skilled knowledge of them are lost to the country, and for many generations we shall never achieve any sort of continuity and good standing in business, nor attain to understanding, skill and credit.'

As an especially serious hindrance to industrial trade some speakers instanced the fact that the land was overrun with 'mischievous caterers to the palate'—bakers, brewers, butchers, publicans, cooks, and so forth, whereby the food of the poor became ever dearer. Others denied the pernicious effects of these trades; any cheapening of food must cause the producers—the peasants—to suffer; only the artisan would profit by it: 'it would be more easy for him to sit in the ale-house, and he would not sell his goods any the cheaper.' The chief cause of high prices and scarcity lay in the taste for superfluity and gormandising, and in thriftlessness: 'The artisan was too fond of good living and was sure to have a young cock on his table before the Prince of the land.' The ducal councillors also spoke to this effect: 'The artisans should refrain from extravagance and luxury in eating, drinking, and dress.'[1]

Before the issue of the new territorial ordinance of 1616, which aimed at abolishing the most flagrant abuses in industrial life, but reserved for the future any thoroughgoing reform of the guild system and of the various branches of manual industry,[2] the court council at Munich, in a memorandum to Duke Maximilian I., had proposed the wholesale abolition of the guilds, 'which were injurious, devoid of usefulness,

[1] v. Freyberg ii. 353–365. [2] *Ibid.* 209 ff.

oppressive to the poor impecunious burghers, and the cause of unnecessary expense.' [1]

As in Bavaria and elsewhere, so too in Saxony heavy complaints were made concerning the deterioration of the guild system. 'The handicraft masters, formerly expert and honourable men,' said a preacher in 1550, 'are in these days almost entirely taken up with their own selfish extravagances, and with getting prices up, while their work all the time is often altogether bad and worthless; and they promote their own interest in a very reprehensible manner by their ancient privileges which nobody is to be allowed to reform.' [2] Elector Maurice, who entered the lists against them in this same year, said: 'The artisans busy themselves greatly about extravagant, unsuitable clothing, and attend more to drink than to work, for which reason they not only overcharge the people, but demand drink-money for their journeymen as well; the masters in the towns manufacture goods of as inferior a kind as possible.' [3]

A vivid description of these degenerate conditions, coinciding with the reports from other towns, is given in a pamphlet, also belonging to 1550, by the council of the town of Demmin in Pomerania. It says in it among other things: 'On admission to the guild of wool-weavers, the young brother who has sent in his "master-piece" has to treat the whole guild to a collation, consisting of 1 ox, 8 sheep, 48

[1] Wolf, *Maximilian der Erste*, i. 357.

[2] *A Sermon against Idleness, Gluttony and other Vices*, by L. B. Jonas (1550), p. 5.

[3] *Codex Augusteus*, i. 67. Concerning the heavy oppression of the people by the guilds, see also the 'Resolution' of the Elector Christian II. in 1612, *l.c.* i. 178–179.

chickens, 6 barrels of beer, with onions, butter, pepper, and other condiments to the value of 18 marks; and on the second day, rolls, butter and cheese to the value of 25 marks.' If he marries outside of the business he must make his wife a member by giving a feast which costs 20 gulden, besides so many etceteras that 'the total amount of his expenses is 262 marks.' 'All that a young man has scraped together and earned, he has to disburse all at once, and if he wants to buy a stock of wool he has nothing left. And if any member through his own diligence gets on his feet again, it is resented against him, and in order to involve him again in expenses, young and old impose themselves on him as guests. When quarrels occur among members of the same guild they instantly summon the parties concerned before their "morning court" in order to impose fines on them and so have something to get drink with. In the shoemakers' guild, widowers or widows who marry again and want to remain in the business, must not make any shoes for nine months. The tailors seldom do any good work, and they spoil all their customers' clothes. The guild, made up of glovers, leather-cutters, and shopkeepers, takes not the half only, but treble and fourfold in interest. But whatever the guilds make by their extortion they squander on the great festival days, on the Sunday after Trinity, carnival, and above all at Whitsuntide; and in order to multiply the number of feast days it has become the evil custom in all the guilds to change the aldermen every year.'

'The most dissolute orgies,' says this pamphlet, 'take place at the most joyful of all festivals, at Whitsuntide. The wool-weavers begin their holiday fourteen

days before Whitsun week, and continue it for fourteen days after, so that their revelries last for five weeks; even on the day of the feast, instead of thinking about the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, they march past the church with fifes and drums sounding. The mill- and farm-boys flock after them, and such a noise of fifes and drums, such a yelling and shrieking goes on during divine service, that the preacher is obliged to pause until the wild hubbub is over; so that God's Word is obliged to give way to these rascally fellows.' [1]

A no less unpleasant account of things is given by the Brunswick councillor of mines, George Engelhart Löhneiss.

'In all places,' he says, 'there is such unchristian dealing in raising the prices of work and wares that not the burghers only but the nobles and the poor peasant folk also are defrauded and drained to the utmost, while the masters daily idle away their time at weddings, christenings and other gatherings and convivialities, dress their wives and children grandly, do no work themselves, leave the journeymen to look after the business by which they and their household are to be fed. Moreover they keep up the dignity of their mastership to such an extent that very few journeymen, however skilful they may be, can themselves become masters, and so as there are very few masters, these few raise the price of their work as much as they like.

'Such privileges and corporations are moreover very much misused, and the burghers and the people are in

[1] H. Riemann, in the *Zeitschr. für preussische Geschicht u. Landeskunde*, iii. 603–606.

the highest degree overcharged, for the masters agree together that no member is to do his work, or sell anything at a cheaper rate than another, for although handicrafts are municipal business it does not follow that it should rest with guilds and guild-masters to decide who are competent workmen and who shall be enrolled as members, which privilege they use entirely for their own benefit and to the great detriment of their neighbours. If they tax and drain the people at their own pleasure, the government has a right to take their privileges away from them.'[1]

Landgrave Maurice of Hesse also complained on the score that the masters of crafts not only conferred together in their guild chambers as to the prices of their goods, but also punished any members of their guilds who undercharged.[2] Concerning the degeneracy of the hand-workers the Landgrave said in 1600: 'On work-days the masters and the journeymen flock in shoals to christenings, weddings and wine bouts, and when they cannot go to these they drink brandy-punch in the morning and go to beer parties in the taverns in the afternoon; all this time the buyers must wait for the sellers eight days, or more perhaps, until the guild gentlemen have drunk themselves out, and then they must pay for the bespoken goods at whatever rate it pleases the besotted vendors to ask. Hence the high prices of goods. For the handicraftsman does not provide for his house and his children, but for his own stomach, he invests his coins in liquid wares, and when he cannot wash his mouth with wine, or foreign beer, he must have roast capon and such like; on Sundays and festivals he holds carousals at the expense of the whole week, while

[1] Löhneiss, 498-499. [2] Rommel, *Neuere Gesch. von Hessen*, ii. 652.

the journeymen, who are not allowed to promenade about as much as the masters on work-days, swim so lustily in beer on Sunday to the tune of their week's wages, that when Monday comes they haven't a farthing left in their purses; then they lounge about idly in the market-places, stare at the windows, fall to gossiping and chattering, or indulge in idlers' pastimes, which are profitable neither to burgher life nor to the art of war, such as target shooting, nine-pins, football and other trumpery, whereby they often commit thefts, murders, and all kinds of misdeeds.' [1]

Between masters and journeymen, in the course of the century, strong antagonism had grown up almost everywhere.

After many battles with the masters, especially during the fifteenth century, the journeymen had succeeded by means of their workmen's clubs in gaining for themselves an assured and honoured position.[2] At the end of the century these clubs reached their zenith; then, however, declined rapidly.[3]

[1] Rommel, ii. 728. Landau, *Materielle Zustände*, 348–349.

[2] See our remarks, vol. ii. 24–27.

[3] 'It is quite a mistake in considering mediæval industrial life to lay all the stress on the guilds and associations of the Masters; the share which the journeymen had in industrial legislation and in the guild assemblies, their strict upholding of honour and integrity within their trades, their influence on apprentice life, their great care for the regulation and the supply of work, all these are factors which secured them a very important position in the then management and organisation of industry.' 'The journeymen knew how to raise their social position higher and higher, and to procure for their clubs a worthy place in the group of mediæval corporations.' 'Alert and vigorous, they were always swift and resolute in action whenever it was necessary either to defend an old traditional right or to fight for a new one; they held class honour high and dear, and they never hesitated to defend it against the proudest of the corporations; merry and jovial, somewhat refined by their "Wanderjahre," they knew well in their time of prosperity (about the end of the fifteenth

Wherever the new doctrinal teaching made its way, the religious brotherhoods of journeymen (which were also most of them benevolent institutions for sick workmen) went to ruin, and the journeymen lost thereby their chief protection against the masters to whose extortion and exploiting they not seldom fell a prey.[1]

The abolition of festival days did not benefit the men, but only the masters.

'Since the introduction of the Evangel,' said, for instance, the Strasburg journeymen furriers in 1529 in a memorandum to the council, the festivals had been abolished, but their weekly wages had not been raised by a farthing; on the contrary, for the period between Christmas and St. James' Day their pay had been diminished by the masters, 'whereby we poor journeymen are put to hard straits and with all our toilsome work can barely earn our daily bread, and still less get clothes or look to bettering ourselves. But since considerably greater profits accrue to the masters through this change, we hope that in justice to ourselves, our earnings on piecework will in no way be lessened.'[2]

century) how to make their festivals the most popular in the towns' 'All the more is it to be regretted that these associations only retained for so short a period the heights they had conquered.' Schanz, *Zur Geschichte der deutschen Gesellenverbände*, 128–130.

[1] 'One of the most important results of the Reformation as far as journeymen were concerned was the dissolution of the brotherhoods founded on a religious basis. Wherever there were no secular associations in existence, the Reformation once more reduced working-men to isolated units, while the masters remained banded together in their guilds and corporations, and were able to oppress the men for their own selfish ends.' Schanz, 64–65.

[2] *Ibid.* 247–248.

The day's work of the journeymen was often extended to fifteen or sixteen hours.

Thus, for instance, the masters of the guild of sword-furbishers in Lübeck, Hamburg, Lüneburg, Wismar, Rostock, and Strasburg in 1555 settled that: 'Every journeyman in our trade, who wishes to act rightly and piously by his master, shall be at the workshop at four in the morning. If, however, any man should sleep till five, he must then work till nine in the evening, be it winter or summer. The fourteen days which the journeymen of our trade in Hamburg have so long been allowed for going to the ale-house, shall no longer be granted them.' Master or journeyman who acted contrary to this 'Christian and praiseworthy regulation' were to be summoned before the corporation, and in case of their refusing to mend their ways or submit to punishment, they were to be handed over to the magistracy.[1] A specially severe ordinance against the journeymen was issued in 1573 by the braziers of Lübeck, Brunswick, Rostock, Stralsund, Wismar, Lüneburg, Magdeburg, Bremen, Greifswald, Hildesheim, Stade, Hanover, Göttingen and Fiensburg. They, too, demanded for four days in the week sixteen hours' work, and for Thursday and Saturday fourteen hours; only every three months were the men to have a free Monday; if they took a holiday on any other Monday they were to forfeit the day's wages and food. The weekly wage was fixed once for all, and was to be the same 'for small or great jobs.' Also, 'no beer was to be given them on the working premises, but only "Kovent" (small beer).' If the workmen rebelled against these and other harsh rules on points of detail, took

[1] Rüdiger, 588–589.

themselves off, and settled down in other places, they were to be treated in all the towns of the corporation as 'traitors and persecutors' of the trade, and not to be encouraged anywhere, unless, after full expiation, they were taken back out of favour.[1] The smiths in the Wendish towns had to work from three in the morning till six in the evening; the ship carpenters in Lübeck from 5 A.M. till 6 P.M.[2]

The master joiners at Freiburg in the Breisgau settled in 1539 that the men must be at their work, summer and winter, from 4 A.M. till 7 P.M.[3] At Nuremberg the daily working hours of the cloth-makers were thirteen,[4] of the ropemakers, fifteen.[5]

The cruelly overworked journeymen could scarcely be blamed if on Monday they wished to be free for half, or even the whole of the day, especially as they did not dare hold their social club gatherings on Sunday.[6] At the beginning of the sixteenth century a half-holiday on Monday was allowed them pretty regularly, sometimes weekly, sometimes fortnightly, for exercise and bathing.[7] At Strasburg in 1536 the following decree was issued for the locksmith and spurmaker journeymen: 'Those whose wages are eight kreuzer and no less, may have Monday afternoon free.'[8] The journeymen joiners in the Breisgau could only have a half-holiday on Monday when there was no festival day during the week.[9] The towns of Lübeck,

[1] Rüdiger, 564–572. [2] Wehrmann, *Lübecker Zunftrollen*, 406, 448.
[3] Schanz, 261. [4] Stockbauer, 33. [5] Schönlank, 601.
[6] Schanz, 114–116. Schönlank, 601.
[7] Stahl, *Das deutsche Handwerk*, 313 ff. Schanz, 114–115.
[8] Schanz, 254. [9] *Ibid.* 261.

Hamburg, Lüneburg, Wismar, Rostock, and Mölln, agreed, in 1574, that the journeymen hatmakers should have Monday free. 'But if a journeyman takes more than Monday for holiday-making, he shall have holidays the whole week, and pay 6*s.* into the master's box into the bargain.'[1]

Just as the general conditions of industrial trade had degenerated, so too there came over 'the good holiday-Monday' a phase of deterioration which led in many towns to its restriction or complete abolition. 'On these good Mondays,' says an edict of the Council of Nuremberg in 1550, 'the workmen did scarcely anything but drink and carry on all sorts of disorderly immoral proceedings: and not on those Mondays only, but on following days also they wronged their masters and evaded their work; therefore they must in future continue at their work on Mondays till vesper time, and the remaining part of the day they could spend "in their drinking-bout and other disorderly ways." For the weeks in which festivals occurred, the "good Monday" was to be entirely abolished.'[2] The Bavarian government ordinance of 1553 wanted the Monday holiday to be given up altogether because 'it led to improper shirking of work, unprofitable dissipation, and other evils; artisans who henceforth persisted in keeping the "good Monday" were to be punished.'[3] The order, however, had so little result that it had to be renewed in 1616 'under

[1] Rüdiger, 554.

[2] Schönlank, 600. ** See also Schönlank's interesting work, *Soziale Kämpfe*, 132 ff.

[3] *Bayerische Landesordnung*, fol. 128.

pain of severe punishment.'[1] The abuses that cropped up may be estimated by a Baden-Durlach ordinance of 1554, by which innkeepers were forbidden on the 'good Mondays' to keep the workmen in bands more than the one day or to supply them with more than the ordinary meal.

Special opportunities for drinking and disorderly conduct were afforded by the so-called *Geschenkte Handwerke*, that is to say, those corporations which made it a rule, on the arrival of any wandering journeyman at their town, to make him a present, with which present a drinking party of all the journeymen was connected. This custom not seldom led to all sorts of improper excesses. Thus an edict issued in Austria in 1550 for the tanners and Muscovy-hides workers said: 'In several places where these trades are carried on, there occur in one week, on the arrivals and departures of journeymen, not merely one or two, but four and five evening gatherings and collations, from which ensue, not only waste of time and other evils in the workshops, but all sorts of disorder, vice, murdering and disgraceful conduct.'[2]

[1] *Zeitschr. für die Gesch. des Oberrheins*, xxix. 434. The Drubeck pastor Balthasar Voigt, in his drama of 1616, described the swinish life of the artisan journeymen in these words:

They keep 'good Monday' like the devil,
Drink, fight, commit all sorts of evil;
On Tuesday badly their heads ache,
On Wednesday with despair they quake,
On Thursday holiday still keep,
But, so sore doth Elsslein weep,
On Friday to the shop they find
Their way, and work as they 're inclined.
Thus the week drags on amain,
On Sunday drink begins again.

[2] Bucholtz, *Ferdinand der Erste*, viii. 270.

In the imperial police ordinances of 1530, 1548, 1559, and later, and also in many provincial police ordinances and municipal regulations, the *Geschenkte Handwerke* were most emphatically forbidden; but all these orders were as a rule nullified by the dogged resistance of the German journeymen class. When the town council at Augsburg on August 21, 1567, put a stop to the practice, the sword-furbishers and coppersmiths rose up in a body and left the town: the council were consequently obliged, towards the end of the year, to rescind their decision.[1]

Friendly relations between the masters and their journeymen and apprentices now seldom existed; to the selfish employers, cutting down wages and food as much as possible, there stood too frequently opposed discontented and defiant workmen, who only worked in a slovenly manner, and, on the evidence of innumerable contemporaries, having no religious or moral backbone, squandered or drank up all their earnings, and fell victims to immorality. The upright and serious-minded Hans Sachs as early as 1535 makes 'Dame Labour' complain that handwork is despised, because the workmen are stinted of their proper pay and thereby incensed and driven to poverty:

> . . . This makes them rabid, turbulent,
> Each on his own advantage bent;
> The humblest of them follow suit,
> And much spoilt handiwork's the fruit,
> Idle they grow, and negligent,
> Gambling, drunken, gluttonous to boot.[2]

[1] v. Stetten, i. 578. Fuller and fresh details concerning the importance of the *Geschenkte Handwerke* for the journeymen and the latter's resistance to their abolition are given in Schönlank, 355–357, 376 ff. ** and in *Soziale Kämpfe*, 77–97.

[2] See our remarks, vol. xi. p. 323.

In this drinking and gorging, the masters at Nuremberg and elsewhere encouraged them by their own bad example. When the Nuremberg Council in 1550 forbad the journeymen to misuse the 'good Monday,'[1] they added the following admonition: 'Whereas the unnecessary and excessive manner in which the handwork journeymen abuse the "good Monday" and other times of leisure is greatly the result of the masters' daily carousing and wine-drinking, the honourable Council addresses to the former, their fellow-citizens and burghers, the masters and their handworkers, a quite fatherly and sincere exhortation, that they would set a good example to their journeymen and others in their service, abstaining from excessive tippling and wine-drinking, especially on working days, so that God's wrath may not be increased against them; and above all that their wives and children may be saved from the terrible habit of following them to the wine taverns and accustoming themselves to drink, and that thus all good and profit may accrue to their souls and their bodies.'[2]

What sort of complaints were raised by the journeymen, and how bitter the relations between them and their masters had become, is learnt from three documents belonging to the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth century.[3]

In the first of these the local and the general company of the fustian weavers' trade complained to the council, in the last decade of the sixteenth century, concerning

[1] See above, p. 126.

[2] Schönlank, 600.

[3] We are indebted for these to the admirable work of Schönlank, 604–612.

the masters' intention to raise the weekly charge for bread from 50 pfennig to 80. 'When corn was quite cheap and we might have bought our bread for less, we paid the 50 pfennig without murmuring; therefore the masters, in the present scarcity, might have a little consideration for us, and act justly by us. They ought also to bethink them that there is not the same risk with our trade as with some others which may stick for want of work; for we have, thank God, a good trade that does not stick, but there is always plenty of work, if only there were enough workpeople to do it, therefore they cannot bring forward the plea for oppressing us with higher bread-money.' 'The food with which the masters were bound to supply them, as they very well knew, was much better formerly than now, and also they used to have a drink of beer handed them at table, which was now given up.' 'Besides this,' the journeymen went on to say, 'we had formerly for our recreation from work seven festivals, and these still go on in other foreign workshops, but here five of them have been cut off, and we now have only two: the Carnival and *Lichtgenss* (Candlemas?). Furthermore no cheese is now given us with our supper, as used to be done: our food is much less in quantity also than in former years. The journeymen in other places do not give more than 5 or 6 kreuzer for their bread, and moreover they are not blamed and punished as we are here. For if we, in great need, drink a small glass of beer, or rest from work for an hour, we are at once censured and docked of our money, though we cannot always drink water; for we work under the earth in damp, reeking vaults, we are obliged to inhale a quantity of dust and other noxious matter, and we cannot all of us get on with only water

to drink always.[1] From this it also follows that many of us become ill, and your excellencies have to send us to the hospital or some other place, which all comes from the above-mentioned wrongs and oppression, and that we poor workmen are so badly treated by the masters in respect of food and other matters.'

'And in addition to all this, we have very low pay. When working on large pieces and doing the best work, we can only earn half a gulden in the week, and on small pieces scarcely an ort, a quarter of a gulden. Besides which we must produce the same work whether the yarn is good or bad, whether we work for a long or a short time at a job; we are also obliged to buy candles for the masters' work, which is not the custom in any other trade; also to pay 6 pfennig for washing a shirt, all which is not so in other places, let alone bath-money, clothes and other necessaries of life. If then the bread-money was raised to 80 pfennig the workmen employed on small pieces would not be able to earn in the week as much as they would have to pay the master for bread and light alone. Out of what then are we to buy the other things we want? It is therefore impossible that we can give in to the masters' demands or allow the 50 pfennig to be raised: it would be better for us to seek a living elsewhere.'

As a specially 'mischievous abuse' which had invaded handwork, the men pointed out that 'a number of married workmen are admitted, who in the end, your excellencies, come to you for alms; most of these also come from foreign places, where they have committed

[1] These cellars, which are still used as workrooms in the *Sieben Zeilen* on the *Weberplatz*, are 'by no means among the worst workrooms of modern Nuremberg.' Schönlank, 604, note.

offences, and have run away from their wives and children. Also the masters employ farm-servants and village weavers, who have scarcely been apprenticed for three months, for the simple reason that they will take whatever is offered them, whereby we journeymen, who have learnt our business well according to the rules of the trade, are ousted. Or else they try to keep us on at the same pay they give these burghers, which is damaging to society at large, and brings our craft into discredit with foreign workshops.

'Therefore our humble petition is, that your excellencies would graciously make the provision that no married man shall henceforth be received here and encouraged who comes from the country, unless he first presents his certificate of proficiency, or gives other sufficient guarantee that he has honourably fulfilled his apprentice years, and learned his trade according to usage, so that the trade's own journeymen be not ousted or harmed by strangers.'

What precise answer the masters made to all these complaints has not become known; but the spirit in which they were treated is seen from a petition sent in by a member of the brotherhood of linen weavers to the Council in July 1601 concerning reduction of wages decreed arbitrarily by the masters, concerning improper use of the fine money, which had not even been put into the fund for the poor foreign and sick workmen, but spent on the masters' drinking bouts, and finally on account of the victualling. 'They gave the men one pfennig per cent. on "mottled work" (kind of linen wove) but only half pfennig on cloth; further instead of payment of the weekly six kreuzers "the bare food out of the kitchen." Bread, light, beer and other things

that we require, we have to buy for ourselves, with our own money, so that with ten batzen we can scarcely hold out for the week. A pound of meat costs only one batzen, but half the time we get none. Yet of this we should not complain if we were relieved of other unfair burdens.'

With regard to reduction of wages the men stated that since Easter 'for every ell of "mottled work" two pfennig had been taken off, and one pfennig from the cloth.' They begged that the Council would protect them as regards the wages which they had received for many years, all the more so as their trade was not one which went on summer and winter alike, but on the contrary they often had to be idle in the winter, and also many of them at the end of their work had to tramp the country for bread.

The counter report of the masters declared all these complaints to be 'long-winded, uncalled-for chatter,' but it appears that even in the master guilds there were dissensions. The journeymen, the report said, were receiving higher wages than they had had twenty-two years before, when they had been quite satisfied. 'Whereas, however, before this, some of the masters, out of jealousy of us, began giving workmen higher wages than had been the previous custom; this induced many to leave their former masters for those who paid higher wages: agitators soon spread the cry for higher wages all round.' They could not, they said, give the men more wages for twelve or twenty years to come; the men were never punished unjustly and wantonly; the boxes for the fines were never emptied by the masters. 'If they think we are bound to put as much meat as they like into their open mouths every day, and

to give them beer, bread, light and other things besides, let them know that we are not bound to do anything of the sort, on the contrary we are forbidden to do so by a clause in our ordinance under pain of punishment.' 'If one or the other of them finds their master's board or wages insufficient, let them seek more elsewhere, the door and the gate are open to them; for there are plenty of workmen everywhere for our trade'; 'other poor foreign loafers wandering about the country and unable to find work have often been glad to be employed here.' In short, the leaders in the complaints were described as 'agitators and idle fellows who thought more of drinking and swilling than of working industriously.'[1]

The Nuremberg hookmakers on one occasion attempted to raise the workmen's weekly payments for food to nearly the double, to a sum which, as the magistrate said, 'many a workman could scarcely earn in the week,'[2] so that all his work would have gone for food only.

How little care was often bestowed by the guilds on the apprentices, in spite of all the old and commendable guild-regulations, is shown by an admonition of the Nuremberg Council in 1595 to the gold spinners, lacemakers, and wool carding tool makers: 'Whereas also the poor young fellows, especially the strangers who have no one in the town to care for them, often have their health seriously affected by bad conditions of food and sleeping accommodation, and bad smells which they are obliged to endure in their small, stuffy rooms, the above-named three trades must be advised that,

[1] Schönlank, 606–612.

[2] Without mention of the year, in Stockbauer, 34.

henceforth, whenever an apprentice who is not a citizen of this town becomes infected with disease and ruined in health in their service, they will be bound to have him doctored at their own expense.' The Council appointed for each of these three industries two presidents who were to take care that the apprentices were protected against hunger and cold, that their health was not injured, that they were not ill-used with blows and reproaches, and not worked beyond their strength and power of endurance.[1]

Simultaneously with the deterioration and decline of industrial life there came a decline of peasant life and agriculture, which had an even more injurious effect on economic conditions.

[1] Stockbauer, 24.

# CHAPTER IV

## PEASANT LIFE—EFFECT ON AGRICULTURE OF UNLIMITED HUNTING—DECLINE OF AGRICULTURE

AFTER the social revolution of 1525 had been extinguished with the blood of the peasants, there followed almost throughout the whole empire the most distressing collapse of agrarian conditions.[1]

The peasant-class, the most vigorous and numerous portion of the people, found itself, generally speaking, without protection and without rights, a prey to the arbitrary will of those in power, and this not only in those districts in which the storms of revolution had raged, but also, and even to a greater degree, in those which had remained untouched by these disturbing influences.[2]

[1] See our remarks, vol. i. 327, on agricultural life at the close of the Middle Ages, and vol. iv. 121 ff., 143 ff., 344 ff., on the social revolution and its consequences.

[2] See K. J. Fuchs, 'Die Epochen der deutschen Agrargeschichte und Agrarpolitik,' in the *Allgem. Ztg.*, 1898, Beil. 70, where he says: 'The position of the peasant-class in the South-West has not on the whole become essentially worse since the sixteenth century. It is quite otherwise, however, as regards the course of development in the North-East, in the lands East of the Elbe which were not Germanised and colonised till the twelfth century. Here the actual decline of the peasant-class, the gradual deterioration of the position they had acquired as colonists, consequent on the formation of the manorial system, and of large landed properties, begins at this very time. First of all the personal conditions of the peasant begin to suffer: he is bound to the manorial domain so long as he has a farm holding within its circumference; he belongs to the lord of the manor, and the Reformation further impairs his rights of possession and his agricultural status. Through the change in the constitution of

At the Spires Diet of 1526, which met immediately after the subjugation of the peasants, the imperial legislation busied itself to some extent with the cause of this down-trodden and persecuted class. It was decreed in the Recess of August 26 that those subjects who were responsible for the insurrection were to be proceeded against in such a manner as to make them understand that the 'mercy and lenity of their rulers were greater and more benevolent than' their own unreasonable action and behaviour; that every ruler should have power and authority to restore to their former position of honour all those subjects who had unconditionally surrendered and received punishment: they may be allowed to act as judges, counsel and witnesses, and also as plaintiffs in matters concerning their own interests and through their spokesmen; justice should be evenly dealt out to them and they were to abide by the judges' sentences.'[1]

Nevertheless only a few of the rulers made use of this 'power and authority'; some of them, especially

the army that took place at this period, the introduction of mercenary troops, the knights who in this region could not be territorial lords, and only to a slight extent town patricians, turned themselves into farmers, and began at once to enlarge the territory belonging to their own knightly possessions by confiscating what had hitherto been peasant lands. Now begins the pulling down of the peasant-holdings and the building up of large manorial properties.' As, however, this enormously increased extent of manorial land was now as before worked by means of the feudal service of the peasants, whose number went on diminishing, these services multiplied in proportion as the supply of peasants decreased, and the peasants, in order that they should not run away, are made personally dependent, or hereditary vassals. The introduction of Roman law also contributed, though not to the extent generally believed, to the injury of the personal and property rights of the peasants. See Knapp in the *Zeitschr. für Rechtsgeschichte*, xix. (1908), 16 ff., 37 ff., 42 ff.

[1] *Neue Sammlung der Abschiede*, ii. 274, § 6; cf. 275, § 8.

ecclesiastical princes, such as the Abbots of Murbach and Maurusmünster, the Bishops of Spires and of Strasburg, showed mercy to the vanquished peasants; Archbishop Matthias Lang of Salzburg gave orders on November 20, 1526, that 'unjust and newly introduced impositions should be abolished; above all nobody should have the power to claim feudal rights over people and lands not held in vassalage before.'[1] It was not many of the princes who could say for themselves what Duke George the Bearded of Saxony wrote regarding the peasant war of 1527 to the Landgrave Philip of Hesse: 'We have, God be praised, taken nothing from anyone; we have behaved in such wise towards them that no one can accuse us of having used violence towards anyone; they are also, thank God, not so greatly impoverished; they have their pennies to spend like others, and they can render aid to their lords like others and better than others.'[2]

In numbers of peasant ordinances of later times there is not a trace of forcible seizure of parishes by the rulers; for instance, in the ordinance of 1544, issued for the village of Kappel near Villingen, whose overlords were the cloister of St. George in the Schwarzwald, and Squire James of Freyburg,[3] and in the ordinance issued two years later by Bishop Philip of Basle for the village of Schliengen.[4]

[1] See our remarks, vol. iv. 351 f.

[2] Seidemann, 'Briefwechsel zwischen Landgraf Philipp von Hessen und Herzog Georg von Sachsen,' in Niedners, *Zeitschr. für histor. Theologie*, xix. 213, 214.

[3] Contributed by Roth von Schreckenstein in the *Zeitschr. für die Gesch. des Oberrheins*, xxx. 442–456.

[4] Contributed by Bader in the *Zeitschr. für die Gesch. des Oberrheins*, xviii. 225–243.

On the whole, however, the words written by Sebastian Franck in 1534 applied equally to the German peasants after the social revolution: 'The peasants are everybody's footstools, and hard pressed they are with socage, dues, tithes, taxes, tolls, &c.' With this lamentable position of theirs and with the hatred which filled their hearts towards their oppressors we may connect what Franck added: 'They are none the more pious for all this, nor are they a simple, peaceable set of folk, but on the contrary, savage, cunning and undisciplined.'[1]

There existed no longer now the powerful imperial central authority, such as formerly, in connection with the Church, had been the actual basis of peasant well-being, had protected the peasants against the encroachments of the princes and nobles, and above all had saved the German peasant-class from the fate which had overtaken the Slav agriculturist.[2] 'There is now no longer any Emperor,' said a fugitive piece of the year 1598, 'for many long years no more any Emperor, who could if he would defend the cause of the poor miserable peasants, in these restless, dissentient times, when everyone is consumed with hatred and discontent, against the harpies, the extortioners and the sweaters. Just tell me what is done at all the many imperial and other Diets? Everything imaginable, but nothing, nothing whatever that is of any use, comfort or protection to the poor man of the land and that would serve to put a bit in the mouths of their oppressors, tyrants and fleecers.'[3]

[1] Weltbuch, Bl. 47. [2] See Nitzsch, i. 337–339, and ii. 3–9, 318.

[3] 'Bauernklage ob der arm Mann nicht auch zum Recht kommen soll?' (a *Flugblatt* of 1598), p. 2. Cf. (D. Sudermann). *Klag der armen Bauern* (Strasburg, 1616).

In the course of imperial legislation since 1526 there had only on one single occasion been any thought of the peasants, and that was when in the Augsburg Recess of 1555 the owners of the land were granted the right to reduce their tenants to the state of serfs and bondmen.[1]

'In what German land,' the fugitive piece of 1598 goes on, 'does the German peasant still enjoy his old rights? Where does he have any use or profit of the common fields, meadows and forests? Where is there any limit to the number of feudal services and dues? Where has the peasant his own tribunal? God have pity on him! All this and other things belonging to the former honourable condition of the peasantry are quite past and gone, so that whoever speaks of such things now is told that he is an enemy of the overlords and a sedition-monger, and deserves to be punished in life, limb and goods.' 'And even admired theologians are quoted to show how sharply the peasants and the "rabble" must be looked after, so that they may not wax wanton again and defy their rulers who alone have authority over them, and again rise up against them.'[2]

Among the number of such theologians, Melanchthon especially, under the lively memory of the social revolution, had pronounced himself in favour of the unlimited power of the rulers. 'Each individual,' he wrote, 'is bound to give whatever the secular government decrees, whether it be tithes or octaves.' 'In Egypt the people were bound to give not a tenth only but a fifth part, and all property was the King's own, and this enactment

[1] *Neue Sammlung der Reichsabschiede*, iii. 19, § 24. Cf. v. Maurer, *Fronhöfe*, iv. 530.

[2] See above, p. 140, n. 2.

was made by Joseph, in whom the Holy Spirit certainly dwelt, and he oppressed the people heavily; nevertheless they were obliged to pay what was exacted.' 'On the part of the peasants it was a crime and an offence to refuse to be bond-servants, for such conduct was contrary to the Gospel and had no reason in it.' 'When the subjects had any complaints to make concerning confiscation of the communal property in water or woods or concerning services and taxes, they ought to proceed to law: rulers frequently had good cause for enclosing common lands, in order to tend them or what not, and even if they did this by force, they must not be opposed with force. Also as regards the imposition of penalties, the peasants had not the right to lay down laws for their overlords; for God had ordained rulers for the purpose of warding off and punishing evil.' 'The Germans,' he reiterated, 'are such a wanton and bloodthirsty people, that they ought to be kept down even more rigorously; for Solomon says, Proverbs xxvi. 3, "A whip for the horse, a bridle for the ass, and a rod for the fool's back;" and Ecclesiasticus xxiii.: "Fodder, a wand and burdens are for the ass, and bread, correction and work for a servant."'[1]

Like Melanchthon, Spalatin also referred to Joseph respecting the burdens of the peasants. 'It was indeed a greater hardship that Joseph, the holy man of God, should have imposed a tax of a fifth part over the whole kingdom, and yet this ordinance was well-pleasing to God.'

Luther, who also required unconditioned obedience to the commands of rulers, said, in 1529, that the peasants were in a better position than the princes. 'You

[1] *Corp. Reform.*, xx. 641 ff. See also our remarks, vol. iv. 362 ff.

helpless, boorish peasants and donkeys, won't you understand? May thunder and lightning strike you! You have the best part, namely use, profit and sap from the vine clusters, and you leave the husks and the skins for the princes. You have the marrow for yourselves, and will you be so ungrateful and not pray for the princes, and not be willing to give them anything?' In one of his sermons on the first book of Moses he said it would be the best thing for them if servants were again subjected to a sort of slavery such as had existed among the Jews. '"Then Abimelech," he said, "took sheep and oxen, and men-servants and maid-servants, and gave them to Abraham and spake unto Sarah," and so forth. Was not that a royal gift? Then he gave them power over the sheep and oxen, and men-servants and maid-servants, so that they were all personal property, and the owners might sell them as they liked; and it would verily be almost best that this state of things should be revived, for nobody could control and tame the populace in any other way. Only if fist and force were at hand, so that if anyone dared to grumble he would have a fist on his head, would things be any better.' The 'pious, holy people' of whom he had been speaking had a fine government, among the heathen also. Now we don't get on. A man-servant in those days was worth from one to eight gulden, a maid-servant from one to six gulden, and they were obliged to do what their mistress wanted. And if the world is to go on, it will not be possible to keep it under control unless these rules are revived.[1]

That servants, as Luther puts it, were 'personal property like other cattle' which the overlords could

[1] See our remarks, vol. iv. p. 363.

buy and sell at their pleasure, was also maintained to be just and right by many representatives of the old pagan Roman law.

The saying in vogue amongst nearly all lawyers of importance at that time, 'All is legitimate, and not tyrannical, that can in any way be backed up by the statutes of the Corpus Juris,'[1] was fruitful of the greatest injury to the peasant-class.

Thus, for instance, the Mecklenburg jurist, John Frederick Husanus, in a pamphlet, 'Über die Leibeigenen,' worked this principle out in detail; the old slavery, based on captivity in war, had been in the main everywhere abolished by Christianity, but without a system of slavery corresponding in great measure to the old one, a town could not exist.[2] To this new servitude the peasants especially were subjected, and hence a landed proprietor had unconditioned right to drive them at any time out of their holdings and to seize the peasants' fields as manorial property.[3] 'The slave-colonist must not bring an action against his overlord, he must render him services and dues, and on the marriage of his owner's daughter he must contribute to her outfit. The overlord has also the right to tax his "slave-colonist," to inflict corporal punishment on him, to seize his goods and chattels, and even to hold over him punishment by death.'[4]

[1] Roscher, *Deutsche Nationalökonomik an der Grenzscheide*, 275–276, and *Gesch. der Nationalökonomik*, 145.

[2] The State needed a system of servitude, 'Vetustae magna ex parte similem.'

[3] '. . . potest eiicere suo fundo, item alio transferre et villam suo arbitratu sibi, e praediis colonis concessis extruere.'

[4] Fuller details concerning the book of Husanus, *De hominibus propriis* (1590), are given in Böhlau, 389 ff.

The jurist Ernest Cothmann, who planted himself on Husanus and was regarded as a practical authority, insisted that the mere fact that a man was a peasant was enough to establish his bondage.[1]

In agreement with Husanus, George Schönborner von Schönborn, Chancellor of Hohenzollern, also said, in a work on State law of the year 1614, that actual slaves no longer existed in Germany, but that slavery was on the whole lawful, because the ownership or possession of what a ruler had acquired by force and valour was just and legitimate.[2]

That under the influence of such principles and assertions of theologians and jurists, the condition of the peasants should have changed greatly for the worse, cannot seem surprising. True, there are yet other considerations here to be taken into account. For instance, deterioration of peasant life is found in the greater part of North-East Germany, where there had been no violent rising of the peasants and where therefore the forcible suppression of the latter could not be excused on the plea that 'by sedition and insurrection they had forfeited their ancient rights.'[3]

[1] Böhlau, 404 ff.

[2] '. . . possessio eius, quod virtute et fortitudine domini acquisitum est, iusta.' Roscher, *Gesch. der Nationalökonomik*, 145, 146.

[3] 'So long as there were ecclesiastical ground landlords,' says Grupp (*Niedergang des Bauernstandes*, 102), 'these had formed a sort of counterpoise, and they still did so in South Germany. But in North Germany these counterchecks had fallen away, causing a great load of oppressions to descend on the peasants. The peasants felt this instinctively and were therefore not inclined to throw in their lot with the Reformation. See Spahn, *Wirtschaftsgeschichte Pommerns*, 39.' Further on (p. 107 ff.) Grupp mentions the agrarian causes which co-operated with the Roman law and the selfishness of the squires: 'The ground-owners were obliged to secure larger profits after the price of the necessaries of life had risen, while the value of money had sunk.' They began to

In Western Pomerania and in Rügen before 1540 there were a number of free peasants besides those who were the property of the overlords. Of these it is said in the 'Pomerania' of Theodore Kantzow, private writer in the Chancellery at Wolgast († 1542): 'They pay their modest rents and have also some definite service to render, at Rügen they give money instead of service. These peasants are of good standing and well-to-do, and if any of them do not wish to live any longer on their farms, or to let their children live on them, they sell them with their lord's leave, and give a tenth part of the purchase money to the landlord. And whoever succeeds them on the farm also gives money to the landlord, and the former occupiers go away with their children and goods wherever they like.' 'And these peasants who hold their farms on hereditary tenure, even should the overlords wish to turn them out, will not go unless they want to do so, they are not so entirely dependent and are at liberty to go where they like.'[1]

Within a short space of time, however, these peasants in Pomerania and Rügen fell a helpless prey to the nobles. The prosperity and the influence of the peasant-class were forcibly curtailed, and violation of rights and customs on the part of the manorial lords

occupy themselves with the export of raw materials, the traffic in corn, wool and cattle. The manifold undertakings in which the nobles engaged led to a great increase of business, and this gave occasion to the well-known expropriations of the peasants. Concerning the serious consequences to the peasants of the transition of the nobility from military pursuits to agriculture, see also W. Meyer, *Guts-und Leibeigentum in Lippe seit Ausgang des Mittelalters* (Halle, 1896), 21, and above, Fuchs in the *Allgem. Ztg.*

[1] Kantzow, *Pomerania*, ii. 418, 432. ** See v. Brünneck, *Leibeigenschaft in Pommern*, 104 ff., and Grupp, *Niedergang*, 106, 116 ff. See also our remarks, vol. i. p. 312 f.

rose even to the height of arbitrary ejection of hereditary tenant-farmers. A nobleman himself, the Rügen bailiff, Matthias von Norman († 1556), complained in the middle of the century of the injury that had accrued to the peasant-class through the influence of foreign law, of the bad administration that went on, the decay of justice, and the usurpation of the nobles. 'The poor,' he said, 'are bled and fleeced.' The good old conditions of possession and privileges were to such an extent undermined that, as Norman briefly summed up the situation: 'Everyone now does what he likes.'[1]

The so-called '*Legen der Bauern*,' that is to say, the seizure of their farms by the knights, had at that time become a widely prevalent practice. As, however, the farms held by the knights on their own 'Plough' were free from taxation, the incorporation of rateable peasant farms in the property of the knights materially increased the burden of the remaining ratepayers. Accordingly the towns, at a Provincial Diet in 1550, complained of the arbitrary proceedings of the knights, who refused to pay taxes on formerly taxable peasant property. When, however, the Duke proclaimed the abolition of tax immunity for the farms which the knights had seized for their own use, the towns began to confiscate peasant lands, so that a decade later the territorial lords on their part complained of the '*Bauernlegen*' (expropriation of farmers) by nobles and towns.[2] 'Nobles and towns,' said Duke Barnim in a Provincial Recess of February 10, 1560, 'are utterly unscrupulous in the wholesale way in which they turn parsonages and glebe lands into new sheepfolds and farms; the lands are unequally rated, many

[1] Gaede, 34, 40–41. Fuchs, 49 ff., 63.

[2] Fuchs, 68, 69.

of them are made free from taxation, many of the knights, under pretext of ancient freedom, refuse to give anything from their little towns and hamlets, and so the land and the taxes are alike reduced to a low ebb.'[1]

From decade to decade the position of the peasants grew worse and worse. 'The laying waste' of taxable farms, that is, the confiscation of peasant farms for the purpose of making larger sheepfolds on the [illegible] become so common, that a ducal decree of 1600 made all further action of the sort dependent on the permission of the territorial lords.[2] In the following year the Duke decreed that in the case of his giving his consent to the eviction of any peasant, without any fault on the peasant's part, the manorial lord must at least let him be free to go away with all his goods and chattels and without demanding compensation; 'the poor peasants,' he said, 'were so distressed by the dearness of everything that they could not afford any longer to pay for a couple of oxen.'[3]

But the peasants always resisted, whenever possible, this tyranny of the landlords, and would not willingly submit to being turned out of their farms, and so finally, in 1616, after some opposition from the territorial government, a fresh Peasant and Shepherd Ordinance was drawn up by Roman jurists and the councillors of noble birth and proclaimed by Duke Philip II., and by this ordinance the power of the manorial lords to seize peasant property was fully recognised and the peasants were deprived of all their ancient rights and all title to hereditary possession. 'The peasants,' so ran this document, 'in our duchy and land are not holders by

[1] Dähnert, i. 479. [2] *Ibid.* 770. Fuchs, 70.
[3] Dähnert, i. 784, 789.

perpetual lease, but bond-servants bound to yield all sorts of undefined feudal services without limitation and certainty. They and their sons are not free to leave their farms and lands without the consent of the rulers. The lands, ploughed and unploughed, and so forth, belong simply and solely to the local landlord and ruler so that the peasants and colonists have no dominion over the soil, and have no right to urge that they and their forbears have lived on the farms for 50, 60, or even 100 years. Therefore neither they nor their sons are free to leave and settle elsewhere without the consent of the rulers, their hereditary lords, and if the rulers want to take back to themselves the farms, fields, and meadows, the peasants must submit without resistance. Also the sons of freeholders, millers holding in fee, innkeepers having title-deeds, must also, like other peasants, be subject to the manorial lords with servitude.'[1]

[1] Dähnert, iii. 835–836. Cf. Gaede, 41–46; Fuchs, 71–73. In this enslavement and plundering of the peasants 'the influence of jurists trained in Roman law is unmistakable.' ** See also Grupp, *Niedergang*, 110 ff., 114. The *De hominibus propriis* of Husanus of Mecklenburg (1550) (see above, p. 144, n. 4), which is at the basis of this movement, also acquired influence in Pomerania. In Rügen the peasants lay under a similar yoke. See Fuchs, 53–63. Concerning the evil influence of Roman law on the peasants in Pomerania see also von Brünneck, *Leibeigenschaft in Pommern*, 129 ff.; and in the same work see 135 ff. concerning the Peasant Ordinance of 1616. The author comes to the conclusion that the Ordinance bound the peasants firmly to the estate: its effects were twofold: it deprived the men of the right to migrate and laid upon them compulsory labour without limit either in kind or in time. 'This peasant ordinance,' says Grupp, 'looks like an overturning of peasant conditions in favour of the ground-lords.' Nevertheless, this did not happen at one blow, and these opinions must in many points be accepted with reservation. If the peasants were called bond-servants, the old bond-service in the strict sense of the word is not meant thereby, but rather peasant obligations, a mild attachment to the glebe coupled with compulsory services to the

In Pomerania-Wolgast great princely agricultural domains were formed out of confiscated peasant farms, and on these, as on the lands of the nobles, the services of the peasants were doubled. The Pomeranian towns also, with appeal to the Mecklenburg jurist Husanus, claimed for themselves the right to turn out the peasants at their will and to retain the farm stock and utensils.[1]

In Mecklenburg at that time the peasants had long since been victims of that 'new slavery' which Husanus pronounced necessary to the maintenance of a State. There, too, bond-service (formerly unknown) on the basis of the Roman law first developed itself in the course of the sixteenth century; by the middle of this century the knights enjoyed 'power of life and property' over the Nether Saxon peasants,

lord of the land. *Lassitic* ownership was not enforced till after the Thirty Years' War; it made the peasant a bondman, and took from him the right to inherit or bequeath land. In Brandenburg also possession first became *lassitic* at this period. See also Bruchmüller, *Die Folgen der Reformation u. des Dreissigjährigen Krieges für die ländische Verfassung u. die Lage des Bauernstandes im östlichen Deutschland, besonders in Brandenburg.* Crossen, 1897. Concerning the change in the position of the peasant-class which took place in Pomerania in the sixteenth century, see also Spahn, *Verfassungs- u. Wirtschaftsgesch. des Herzogtums Pommern,* 124 ff. 'The question of the crushing down of the social position of the peasants occupied the nobles at the Provincial Diets up to the year 1616, when the hesitation of the princes helped the efforts of the knights to gain the day. It was not from agrarian interest that they devoted themselves for such a length of time to peasant concerns, but rather from financial considerations. In spite of a few antagonistic utterances scattered here and there, the dominant impression remains that if the Estates had been willing to pay land tax for the farms taken over and worked by themselves, the Dukes would have had little to say against the ejecting of the peasants. For if not the ejecting also, the bleeding and sweating of the country people was probably nowhere so severe as in the princely domains' (p. 124 ff.).

[1] Fuchs, 76–81.

formerly free, now in bondage.[1] It was related of the squires there that 'they fasten their peasants a whole day behind a red-hot stove and give them nothing to eat but over-salted herrings' noses, and nothing at all to drink. No wonder if their thirst drove them to lick the oven!'[2] At Neukahlen, in 1562, a peasant was once punished by having his beard firmly wedged to a block.[3]

At the Diets, the towns and the knights raised endless complaints against each other concerning the peasants. The towns complained that 'the nobles took from their peasants, who wanted to sell their cattle, for every heifer, half a gulden,' and altogether did not allow them free sale of their produce. The knights, on the other hand, complained that 'in the towns, to oppress the peasants, a certain price was put on corn and the burghers were forbidden, on pain of punishment, to pay any more for it; then when the peasants bring their goods to the town they have to sell the corn at a lower price, while the burgher arbitrarily raises the price of his goods and gives the peasant bad coin into the bargain.' 'Everything that others did for their own benefit,' says Duke Ulrich, 'was at the expense of the poor peasants, but it is the duty of the princes to look after the peasants as well as after the other classes.'[4] How the princes fulfilled this duty was shown in 1607 by a decision of the territorial lords at a Provincial Diet at Güstrow. The peasants were declared to be mere 'colonists' who, at command, must give up their acres to the ground-lord,

[1] 'Tho Ghude und Live mechtig,' it was said at a Provincial Diet in 1555. Hegel, 211.

[2] Fischart, *Geschichtklitterung*, 95.

[3] Franck, *Altes und Neues Mecklenburg*, book x. 107.

[4] Hegel, 197–198. Franck, book ii. 75; cf. xii. 73.

and who could not claim any hereditary rights, 'even if they had been in possession of the land from time immemorial.' Only when it was a question of their own privileges, especially as regards exemption from taxes, did the nobles appeal to the 'sanctity of old traditions.' They went on systematically with the work of laying waste the peasants' farms, and killing off the peasants; the well-to-do ones were gradually transformed into poor serfs, in consequence of which the country towns, in which the peasants had been wont to buy all their necessary supplies, suffered irreparable loss. Before long, traffic was carried on with serfs as with horses and cows.[1]

A change of like melancholy nature came over the peasantry in the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein. There, too, it was in the sixteenth century that servitude first gained a firm foothold. With the exception of a few districts, in which the subjugated Wends had settled, the knights' farms were originally not much larger than the peasants'; it was only through forcible pulling down of whole villages that they acquired their later extensive proportions. Still, at the present day some of the farm premises go by names which originally designated the boundaries of villages that had been destroyed.[2]

In Brandenburg the nature of peasant subjection had already become more severe towards the end of

[1] Fuller details are given in Böhlau, 359–409. A. F. Glöckner in Lisch, *Jahrbücher*, x. 387 ff. Boll, *Gesch. Mecklenburgs*, i. 352 ff., and ii. 142, 147, 569.

[2] See G. Hanssen, *Die Aufhebung der Leibeigenschaft und die Umgestaltung der gutsherrlich-bäuerlichen Verhältnisse überhaupt in den Herzogtümern Schleswig und Holstein* (Petersburg, 1861), pp. 10–12. Hanssen in the *Archiv der politischen Ökonomie*, iv. 113, n. 2

the fifteenth century; it was then recognised as a fixed principle that the peasants were the vassals of their squires.[1] Elector Joachim I. did, for a time, lend a full hearing to the frequent complaints of the peasants concerning the extension and strengthening of manorial power, and he constantly threatened the knights with interference from himself as territorial lord. Finally, however, he went over entirely to the side of the knights. In 1527, contrary to all impartial legal usage, he assured them that he would never introduce a complaint of the peasants against them before the accused manorial lord had expressed his own opinion on the matter; and even then he would only allow the peasants to take legal action, if he did not consider the explanation of the knight proprietor satisfactory. In order to frighten off the peasants from making complaints a decree was issued by Joachim II. in 1540, and again by John George in 1572, to the effect that, 'Owing to the fact that the knight proprietors are often accused at court by the peasants, summoned by them, and involved in expenses, be it henceforth understood that whenever a peasant

[1] Grossmann, 12 ff. ** See Kausch, *Die gutsherrlich-bäuerlichen Verhältnisse in der Mark Brandenburg bis zur Zeit des Dreissigjährigen Krieges* (Dramburg, 1900), p. 21 ff. 'On the whole (since this condition of servitude had developed) the poor people had just enough to live and pay their dues. Consequently they had lost all interest in the improvement of their property and in the progress of agriculture, for it was only in the very smallest degree that they could reap the fruit of their own industry. Under the pressure which weighed them down and the narrow limits of their outlook, all spirit of endeavour, all striving after advancement, was choked in the peasant class. They lived from day to day, working on in stolid indifference.' 'That the Mark was not rent in pieces by the peasant-war, was undoubtedly less owing to the peasants' contentedness with their position than to the strong territorial authority and power possessed by the knights.' (p. 26).

complains of his overlord and does not give sufficient justification for his complaint, he shall, in accordance with our chamber reforms, be punished by imprisonment in the tower, in order that the other peasants may learn to refrain from such insolent complaining.'[1] At the same time the manorial lords were granted full right of forcible 'buying out, or ejection of the peasants,' for the purpose of extending their own landed property: all peasants were to vacate their tenements and surrender them to their overlords for reasonable compensation, whenever they (the overlords) wanted to start a new farm or to build a dower house for a wife. Besides this, the groundlords were given the right 'to relegate refractory peasants,' that is, to turn them out of their farms and out of the village; if a peasant did not pay his rent at the proper time 'the landlord was entitled to distrain the tenant himself.'[2] Even though it was still always recognised in principle that the peasants were personally free beings, it nevertheless distinctly tended to personal unfreedom that at numbers of Provincial Diets it was settled that 'the children of

[1] Korn, 20. Winter, *Märkische Stände*, xix. 277–278. Mylius, vi. Abt. 1, 112. Kausch, 32: 'According to the reformed legislation of the Imperial Chamber of 1540, the punishment for peasants who insolently appealed against their overlords was six weeks' imprisonment in the tower. This seems, however, not to have been effectual enough, for in 1602 the Estates actually insisted that corporal chastisement should be inflicted on such insolent complainants, and that a similar punishment should befall those who incited the peasants to unnecessary complaints.'

[2] 'Thus the knights were invested with power to protect themselves and with right of execution in their own affairs independently of the ordinary courts of justice, and the full significance of this state of things can only be realised, when we remember how clumsy at that period was the machinery of the Imperial Chamber at which alone the peasants might complain, the distance of the peasants from its sessions, the above-mentioned difficulty of going to law, and the punishment in case of losing their suit.' Korn, 41. ** Cf. Kausch, 27 ff.

the peasants were bound to serve the overlords as domestics in preference to other employers.' From this there grew up the system of compulsory domestic service which was justly regarded as most hard bondage.[1] Further, the peasants were forbidden the right of moving to another place, and the right of being received in any other town or village, unless they presented a certificate of dismissal from their former overlord.[2]

The eviction of the peasants, so the towns complained in 1549, caused the growth of the country proletariate, which streamed into the towns and became a burden on the poor rates.[3] In the Altmark and the Priegnitz the knights themselves complained in 1606 that 'the

[1] In 1594 the Estates of the Altmark represented to the Elector that: 'Although we remember and are well aware that in the Acts of the Estates it is in such wise decreed, we nevertheless venture to say quod durissima videatur esse servitus et contra dispositionem iuris communis introducta, nec in omnibus Marchiae locis pariter recepta, which had never before prevailed in the Altmark.' Korn, 32–33. See also Grupp, *Niedergang*, 114. Kausch remarks (p. 26 ff.): 'At first it was decreed by the Provincial Recess of 1518 that no domestic servant should hire himself out in service, or offer himself for service, unless he had first offered himself to the overlord under whom he was born and was settled. This decree was renewed at a number of Diets as in 1534 and 1536. Later on this obligation was restricted to three years (as in a domestic servant ordinance of 1629 for the Mittel-Ucker and Neumark).'

[2] ** 'The natural result of this oppressive subjugation was that the inhabitants of the country largely sought escape from bondage by crowding into the towns where an independent existence was more easily within their reach and the wages of their labour came to them undiminished. The knights, however, found a way of putting a check on this flight from the country. Under Albert Achilles the law had already been enforced that nobody among the peasants or vassals, not even their servants, might by anyone be received, housed or provided for without their master's knowledge and consent, and it had already become a fixed principle that no peasant might take himself off without producing a guarantor. Removal abroad was altogether forbidden.' Kausch, 26.

[3] Winter, *Mürkische Stände*, xx. 515.

confiscation of peasant goods had become so common that it caused a great deal of abuse and disorder'; peasant lands were not only turned into knights' property and seats of the nobles, but were also used 'for widows' jointures, official premises, sheepfolds and other requirements of all sorts.' Some of the peasants also were robbed of their fields and meadows; farmers were turned into cottagers (without land), and on these confiscated lands, just as if they were knights' property, no taxes were paid, so that the country sustained great loss from failure of the peasants' taxes.[1]

[1] Grossmann, 27, n. 5. ** What Count Anton of Oldenburg in Bavaria had seen he quickly imitated. See R. Allmers, *Die Unfreiheit der Friesen zwischen Weser und Jade* (Stuttgart, 1896) and K. Ellstaetter, 'Der Untergang der Friesischen Bauernfreiheit,' in the *Frankf. Zeitung*, 1897, No. 159. The latter remarks in the appendix to the monograph of Allmers: 'Count Anton profited by the introduction of the Reformation for the confiscation of the extensive ecclesiastical lands. The property he thus seized was mostly taken under his own management and the peasants put to feudal service on it, and such hard unlimited service it was that they were obliged to neglect their own lands. Further, he seized the communal land which hitherto had served, above all, for the maintenance of the pastors and churches, as well as for defrayment of the dike-tax. All school instruction came to a stop. This indeed was obviously the intention of the Count: for when once he had crushed down the peasants mentally and morally, and made them incapable of defending their rights, it would not be difficult for him to crush and disable them also in agricultural respects, and finally to convert them into complete bondsmen. The seizure of the land which had hitherto borne the dike-tax resulted in greater and greater neglect of the dikes, which finally became unfit to resist the invasion of floods. The peasants, overburdened with feudal services on the Count's farms and with the construction of dikes for his benefit, had no time to cultivate their own land, let alone to keep the dikes in repair. The salt-water floods ruined the soil and made it unproductive; every flood was followed by a ravaging pestilence which carried off all the animals that had escaped drowning, and marsh fever enfeebled the men. Added to these evils was the disgraceful manner in which the territorial lords abused their rights of jurisdiction: on the most trifling pretexts the goods of the peasants were seized by the law-courts, and the whole family turned out of house and home. Soon every peasant

The peasant, completely tied to the spot and at the mercy of his overlord's humours, was burdened with harder and harder tasks in proportion as the manorial estates increased in extent and required more frequent services. Formerly the amount of such services had been limited to three or four working-days in the year; later on the knights required of the peasants to be ready at all times to render them service. In the electoral Mark, under the Elector's approval, it became an established rule that the peasants were bound to yield unlimited service if they could not adduce proof of an opposite usage.[1] For the Neumark, the Elector John George, after the knights had taken over part of the very large amount of debts outstanding at his accession,

came to be regarded as the property of one or other of the Count's farms; the once strong, sturdy men who had made up the free German peasantry of old were now mere serfs. Count Anton's policy was systematically aimed at crushing the peasants more and more. The abolition of their power to divide the ground property and of the right to inherit is a further step in this direction. The consequences of the forcible suppression of the marsh peasants were frightful. At the time of Count Anton's death the whole country was in a state of decay; agriculture was at its lowest ebb. Only on the Count's own estate did a better condition of things prevail. Wide tracts of peasant land lay waste, for the peasants, owing to their heavy feudal services, had no time to cultivate their own fields, and under the crushing load of manorial taxes they often could not afford the necessary live and dead farming stock. The sale of part of their possessions, which might have helped them, was forbidden them. Numbers of peasant farms were left standing empty and fell in to the Count; the owners had either been drowned by floods resulting from neglect of the dikes or else they had left the country.'

[1] Korn, 33–35, 39. G. F. Knapp, *Die Bauernbefreiung und der Ursprung der Landarbeiter in der älteren Teilen Preussens*, i. 39–46; proofs of the increase in labour, in Grossmann, 39 ff. ** Cf. also Kausch, 30 ff. 'These hard services often drove the peasants, especially those who had no right of tenure, to leave house and home and go across the border. From the Neumark the peasants often fled to the neighbouring Poland, taking with them their farm utensils which belonged to the overlords' (p. 32).

informed the peasants through his *Statthalter* in 1572 that 'they must serve the squires two days a week with carts, ploughs, and manual labour, and in August, at harvest-time, as often as they were wanted, and must also help them with cartage and labour in their building.' But that the squires were actually not satisfied with these concessions is shown by a decree of the Elector's, in which he said 'it was not his intention to let the poor peasants be tired out with still further services beyond these two days; he hoped that honourable and reasonable nobles would not behave in such an unchristian manner to their people as to burden them with further services beyond these two days' work, which were already hard enough for them.'[1] The word 'Leibeigenschaft' so greatly wished for by the squires appears first in Brandenburg in a legal document of 1653.[2]

In the Oberlausitz also the nobles claimed the right, for the extension of their estates, to buy out the peasants against their will. They sold the peasants' goods and the peasants into the bargain, just as suited them, multiplied their personal services, exacted household service from their children, levied oppressive taxes on all inherited lands, and compelled the peasants to make them the offer of their land produce before they had taken it to the market. If a peasant wanted to buy himself free, his son or his daughter forfeited the whole or half of the paternal or maternal heritage; if any of them went away without leave they lost their whole property. For disobedience to their overlords thirty-five peasants from one single village were brought in 1540 before a court of justice in Görlitz; two of them

[1] Mylius, vi. Abt. 1, 101.

[2] Lette and von Rönne, 'Die Landeskulturgesetzgebung des Preussischen Staates,' i. 17. Grossmann, 53.

were beheaded, and all the rest banished from the land; in the same year, from another village, thirty-four peasants were thrown into prison for refusing the excessive services. The Görlitz burgomaster, John Hass, a man of strict aristocratic sentiments, said that 'the peasants were treated like pagans and Turks.' [1]

In Anhalt and in the electorate of Saxony the condition of the peasants was better than in the neighbouring lands. In Saxony hereditary vassalage and socage services did not weigh so heavily on the peasants as in the Lausitz and in Brandenburg. This favourable state of things 'was pre-eminently due to the Elector Maurice's government policy, the significance of which has not hitherto been done justice to. What in other countries was first attempted in the eighteenth century, viz. keep lists of the services due from peasants in fief, in order to protect them from unlimited and arbitrary pressure, was already begun in the Saxon electorate in the middle of the sixteenth century.'

In the official court rolls and books of entail exact entries were made of all that was worth recording in agricultural matters. The institution of these official books is the most important service achieved by the government under the Elector Maurice.[2] All the reforms which the government attempted, whether for the raising of the peasants' position, or the improvement of agrarian industry, were carried through without serious objections from the immediate subjects of the prince, but met with frequent resistance from his mediate subjects, whose immediate landlords, the knights, defended their chartered rights. The feudal

[1] Kimmel, *Joh. Hass*, 8–10, 185–186; cf. 172.

[2] Wuttke, *Gesindeordnung und Gesindezwangsdienste in Sachsen*, p. 24.

services imposed on the peasants in Saxony were those customary all over Germany.[1] A glance at the contents of the court rolls and books of entail of the knights' estates shows the pleasant fact that all the feudal services were nearly throughout moderate. Only concerning the immediate subjects of the district of Lichtenwalde (book of entail of 1502) do we read: 'they must attend as often and whenever they are summoned, with horses, carts, ploughs, and hands, ready for service, and there is no rule.' In the district of Dresden, according to the book of entail of 1547, there were also, in some villages, no fixed rules for enforced services. 'When they are wanted they must help like others, for the customary wage.' On the other hand, even at that early date efforts were being made to change personal service into money payments. In the district of Nauenhof (book of entail of 1548) and manorial estate of Sachsendorf (book of entail of 1587) all services and dues were already computed for money, and in the *Erb-brief* (register of succession) of the district of Voigtsberg (1580) it says: 'Concerning the services rendered by the villages we have no record, but the services of the people appear to have been changed by Duke John Frederick into money payments.' Manorial proprietors made contracts with their vassals for changing their services into money fees. The State took the lead in this innovation.

In the first years of the reign of the Elector Augustus all the hunting, post, kitchen, and cellar socages were computed for money. Nevertheless the Elector reserved to himself the right of demanding personal service instead of money. Towards the end of his reign the

[1] Wuttke, 27, 29.

work of computation came to a standstill, and it was not resumed again till the reigns of Christian II. and John George I. Under the latter especially, and down to the times of the Thirty Years' War, it went on again in a comprehensive manner.[1]

In spite of these favourable conditions, heavy grievances were not lacking even in Saxony. In 1569 the parishes of Reinsberg and Dittmannsdorf addressed serious complaints against their manorial lords to the supreme court at Leipzig: 'In the last seed-time,' they said, 'while engaged in their hard field labour they had suddenly been attacked with spears, muskets, and other murderous weapons; some of them had been very badly knocked about, others tortured with the thumbscrew, and taken in chains to prison; amongst their number were thirty women, some of whom were pregnant. After this a large quantity of their cattle

[1] ** Wuttke, 29. At p. 34 ff. Wuttke contributes passages from a MS. of the Royal Library at Dresden, *Instruktion für einen Vorwerksverwalter*, written probably about 1569. At p. 37 ff. he gives an 'order for food for the domestics,' from which we may gather that the servants of the household were well and abundantly fed. 'Wages also had greatly risen in Saxony in the sixteenth century.' As regards compulsory domestic service, Wuttke thinks the materials at hand warrant the belief that it did not exist 'as an organic and legal system in Saxony down to the sixties of the sixteenth century, but only in isolated cases, as exceptions, on some of the manorial properties.' This was not changed till the reign of the Elector Augustus, who 'in the middle of the sixties took on himself the personal administration of the domains and met with difficulties in providing an adequate staff of servants for the estates.' In 1568 he introduced compulsory household service for his immediate subjects on manorial properties. After the beginning of the seventeenth century the knights also claimed the right of demanding compulsory service from their peasants (p. 46 ff.); but in spite of all their efforts, before the Thirty Years' War this right was not recognised as belonging to them; only on a few manorial estates did compulsory service gain any firm footing (p. 48). It was not till after the Thirty Years' War that compulsory service became the law of the land.

was penned up, and some of it had sickened, some starved, or come otherwise to grief, because they had not been able to feed, milk, or tend the animals. Besides this the overlords had taken from each vassal three imperial thalers in money or seed-corn, and thus raised more than 200 gulden out of the parishes. Many of the peasants had not been able to endure imprisonment any longer, and so had submitted to the fresh burden; the rest were enduring still harder captivity on bread and water.'[1]

When in 1583 the peasants from four villages went to Dresden to complain to their territorial prince, the Elector Augustus, of excessive building socages they were rated by the Elector as 'insurgents,' and, as they declared, actually threatened by him with the naked sword: 160 of them were kept in prison for more than eight days.[2] When complaints concerning Henry von Schönberg were addressed to the territorial government at Dresden in 1599, by the peasants of four villages who were his vassals, and who accused him of 'having loaded them with intolerable socage duties, of having thrown them into a disgusting and unwholesome prison, and of having himself personally attacked them,' sentence was given in his favour.[3]

In 1580 an electoral edict was issued to the effect that 'the poor peasants, who can be employed all the week, are not to be burdened on Sunday with socages, services and other duties, for even cattle and dray oxen are allowed to rest on Sunday.'[4]

[1] Fraustadt, i[b]. 206–207.

[2] *Ibid.* 336–337.

[3] *Ibid.* i[a]. 285–286. Concerning the treatment of the Pulnitz vassals of Hans Wolf von Schönberg, see i[a]. 371.

[4] Beeck, 695.

That the condition of the country people in the Saxon electorate cannot be so very favourably regarded is shown from the pictures which Saxon preachers sketch of the treatment of peasants.

'Amongst the nobles and the squires of the land,' said, for instance, the Meissen Superintendent Gregory Strigenicius in 1598, 'there are only a few who have a true fatherly heart towards the poor vassals.' 'Tyrants in plenty we find among them who oppress their vassals so cruelly that they cannot thrive and prosper; they load them with heavy socage duties and intolerable burdens, so that all through the week they are hard at work, and on Sunday they employ them as messengers, and they do not even give them a morsel of bread in return.' 'Many of the squires treat their vassals like dogs, so that they may well say: "I am a poor man." In very deed "a poor man." If a vassal happens to have done something amiss these cruel tyrants fine him many thalers, which they only spend in gorging and swilling, and if the poor man is ruined in consequence no pity or mercy is shown him.' 'Many of them build cottages wherever they can and put the serfs to live in them in order to raise and increase their taxes, and never think to ask where the poor men are to get the money to pay the taxes, or how they can raise it. What profit or piety these overlords bring to a parish the villagers know right well. When the poor vassals, in times of dearness, need corn or any other supplies, they are not allowed to have them for the cash which they are worth, but on a loan and at a higher price; they also mix tares, barley, vetch and oats together, and all must pass as good corn, though it is often much more like pigs' food or dogs' food. If the poor people

cannot pay, they are at once despoiled of all they possess, even should they have to go naked, and not even have a pair of shoes left, or enough money to buy a pair. Many of them also think nothing of bloodshed, and if they have taken the lives of one or several of their vassals they do not trouble themselves about it. If we hold God's word before them, and tell them they have done wrong, they say: "What do we care for the Bible? Why should we obey the priests? We mustn't give in too much to the priests; they want to get the government into their own hands and start a fresh papacy." It is impossible to tell of all the wickedness and violence that proceed from these people.' [1]

The preacher Cyriakus Spangenberg, a man thoroughly acquainted with the conditions of peasant life, utters complaints of a similar nature. In his 'Adelsspiegel' (mirror of the nobility) of 1591, and in other writings, he puts the plainest truths before the princes and nobles. They were acting very shamefully, he says amongst other things, 'by imposing heavy unendurable taxes and always increasing them more and more, by yearly raising the rents, and the wood-money and the mast-money' (money paid for driving pigs in the forest) 'and other duties, contrary to all old usage; and thereby inordinately oppressing the poor people.' 'They also act very unjustly when they compel the vassals to sell them corn, wine and other commodities at times of cheapness, and then to buy from them at the dearest times when they could buy more advantageously elsewhere. Also, when they compel the peasants against their will to leave their farms or to sell their paternal heritage, meadows, fields, gardens, houses, land and

[1] Diluvium, 185.

soil, and so forth. Also they leave it to their officials, their sheriffs, magistrates, bailiffs, &c., to fine the poor people at their discretion for any offence. They would indeed be sorry if their people were always good and pious, and much prefer that they should every day have something to confess' (and be fined for!).[1] Vehemently did Spangenberg inveigh against those squires who, he wrote, 'behave so tyrannically towards their miserable servants, especially when they are poor, forsaken, fatherless children, or strangers from afar off, and treat them worse than dogs, belabouring them at their pleasure with whips and cudgels even when they don't deserve punishment, or torturing them most mercilessly. If the poor creatures fall ill with the plague, murrain, or any other complaint, they turn them out like dogs, and do not take the least notice of them, or only leave them in some out-of-the-way corner where they are as likely as not to die.' 'Also it is iniquity beyond any Turkish or heathenish practice, that when the plague attacks one of the peasants' houses they nail up the doors so that nobody can get out to fetch help for the poor victims and nobody can get at them to do them a Christian service,' &c., &c.[2] In another place Spangenberg spoke out very strongly against those squires 'who erected buildings by the very sweat and blood of the poor so that the stones cried out of the walls and the beam out of the timber answered them,' as Habakkuk says (Ch. ii. v. 11).[3]

[1] Frieze, *Müntzspiegel*, Appendix, 239–244, 260–261.

[2] *Adelsspiegel*, ii. 411[b], 431. See also our remarks, vol. xiv. pp. 86–102, concerning the want of pity towards plague-patients in Protestant districts.

[3] *Adelsspiegel*, ii. 74.

The preacher Bartholomew Ringwalt put the following words into the mouth of a squire:

Potz Leiden, Lord God, Sacrament,
Cross, martyr, wounds and element;
This was my motto and my prayer
When my young lips first open were.
I was a heartless overlord,
Stinted my vassals in their board,
Gave them neither bread nor grog,
Left them to starve like any dog.
The peasants too held me in dread,
With toil I well nigh drove them dead,
Gave them no rest the livelong day,
And also pawned their cows away.
Right bitter did I make their lives,
I swore at them for rogues and thieves,
And let the world hear me declare
Not half as good as me they were.[1]

John Sommer, preacher at Osterweddingen, in 1613 spoke very incisively about the cruel wrongs of the peasants: 'The parents and the forbears of the lazy, idle loungers who call themselves squires, long ago lent the peasants very scanty money on their fields, and so got possession of them. Now they cannot be bought back, and they pass from father to son by hereditary right. The farmer is now bound to pay yearly heavy rents to those inheritors and to carry the sour sweat of his brow to town for the benefit of the idle, lazy drones. Even if the peasants have enough money to pay off the sum, they are not allowed to do so; the cunning birds of prey have got them in their clutches, and will not let them out of their power again. It 's down in writing, they say at last, and entered in the register. But, oh God, what an incongruity that is! When the field was transferred

[1] *Christl. Warnung des trewen Eckarts*, Bl. F. 5–F. 6.

the wispel (24 bushels) of wheat was worth about 8 or 9 thalers; but I found in church registers that in 1540 the wispel had been fixed at only 7½ gulden, whereas in our time it is often worth 20 or 24 thalers. But it happens that many a farmer has no horses and carts of his own, but has to hire them at the yearly cost of 12, 13 or 14 wispels of wheat. Now let any wise householder say how they can possibly make both ends meet under such circumstances. But when the peasant dies and leaves a house full of children behind him, then first is the lament about money heard. For according to Saxon law the youngest son is the heir, and takes over the housekeeping. The property is made over to him for a sum of money with the consent of the ruler. Out of it he must pay not only the heavy yearly rents, but also his brothers' and sisters' share in the inheritance for a certain term, besides the marriage portions in oxen, swine, sheep, bedding, chests and trunks, meat and beer, which he cannot refuse. Whichever way he now turns he finds nothing but debts, and already at his start he is plunged in sorrow and anxiety. If he cannot pay up everything with his own stock of corn, but is obliged to procure more from elsewhere, either from the landlord's stores or from the forestallers, then God have pity on him, for he is then obliged to give about 2 thalers more per wispel than he would have to pay in ready money at the market. There is nowadays not enough mercy or pity among the rich, to lend the needy peasants a few wispels of corn at seed-time, to be paid back again in the same measure at harvest-time. No, nobody wants that sort of thing. If a peasant in his distress needs a little money, he cannot in these days borrow

it at any ordinary rate of interest, but is obliged to pay a mortgage of corn on it, and for a matter of 100 thalers give half a wispel of wheat, or maybe 13, 14 15 bushels yearly.' [1]

'The people in the country,' Sommer goes on, 'also complain very bitterly that they are very sharply dealt with by the law officials, that the latter, on the most trivial grounds, exact unreasonable fines from them, so much so, that people versed in the law are quite astonished. They frequently summon them to the law-courts if they are accused of any debts, and often exact fine from the accuser as well as from the accused. Yes indeed, they are always ready to distrain, even if the debt is not more than half a thaler, so long as they can fill their own purses. When the peasants apply for leave to hold a wedding, the officials allow them about two or three barrels of beer and pretend that the overlords will not grant them any more. But if they pay the fine or give a thaler on every barrel of beer then they may have as much as they like; then it is no longer a sin to drink beer and it does not injure the peasants, as had before been declared with great solemnity.'

'There is also much complaining in the country because the bailiff does not have the barns cleaned out early enough, but puts it off till nearly the middle of the harvest, and so the men told off for the cleaning have to leave their rye but half cut down, with the evil result that the wheat becomes over-ripe before the rye harvest is finished, and is burst open by the wind and the grain remains in the field. The people furthermore complain that in the middle of

[1] Olorinus Variscus, *Geldtklage*, 569–571.

harvest-time, when they ought to be gathering in the corn, they are often called away by the bailiff to work in the fields of the overlords.'

'The peasants have indeed certain contracts and agreements which many years ago were ratified and confirmed by the seal of the magistrates, but these are no protection to them, as I have come to know in my journeys to and fro through the villages, and in many places new burdens are imposed on them, and the services to the overlords are multiplied.'

'Among other grievances in the country it is also complained that the rulers almost yearly raise the mill and public-house taxes and so increase their own incomes, while they reduce still further the meagre subsistence of their vassals.' 'What can the poor vassals do? They must be silent and put up with all the injustice. Only lately I was also informed that the tax-gatherers and officials, at the time for fattening the pigs, not only overstock the forests with swine, but also raise the price of the acorns and beechnuts on which these animals fatten. The poor fellows are thus cheated out of their money. They bring home lean swine which must further be fed on corn if they are to be of any use to the kitchen. However, as this is well known, as indeed are other grievances, I consider it quite unnecessary to trouble you with any further information on the subject.'[1]

'Almost in all lands peasant fleecers are only too well known to the people; very cruel tyrants,' says a '*Bauernklage*' of 1598, 'who are not much better than their brothers in Livonia, of whom it is known

[1] Olorinus Variscus, *Geldklage*, 560–569.

that they take delight in playing the part of hangmen and torturers to the poor peasants.'[1]

In Hesse at a Provincial Diet in 1569 the Landgrave William reproached the nobles with behaving to their vassals as though they were Wends or Slavs, and as though they (the nobles) possessed power of life and death over them. Some of these tyrants had thrust quite old men of nearly eighty into towers and stocks for very slight offences, and in the middle of winter, with unheard-of cruelty, had had cold water poured over them, so that the poor men's feet had frozen.[2]

'Of this tyrannical beating, scolding, fleecing, taxing, &c.,' wrote the Frankfort preacher Melchior Ambach concerning the poor peasants in 1551, 'there is no end, and there is less mercy among these evangelicals than with the devil in hell or with unbelieving Turks. They watch, too, like jackdaws over nuts, to see how they can punish their vassals with money-fines.'[3]

[1] *Bauernklage* (cf. above, p. 140, n. 3), p. 7. When in 1564 the nobles of Livonia who had been subjugated by the Swedish King Eric XIV. begged for mercy, they received from the King, May 22, the answer: 'He would only restore the nobles of the Wiek to the enjoyment of their own possessions, and liberate those in captivity to him if the whole body of knights would swear by a Swedish oath that they would desist from the unchristian scourging and torturing with which they had hitherto plagued the poor peasants.' The Harriensers, to whom Eric made a similar condition, said that 'there was such a multitude of refractory brutes of people that it might be regarded as a mercy merely to grant them their lives even though their bodies were plagued; but the plaguing and torturing must by no means be given up, or all order and discipline would be at an end.' Lossius, i. 71. In a rising in 1560 of their too cruelly down-trodden peasants, two members of the house of Uexküll were killed (p. 81).

[2] Rommel, *Neuere Gesch. von Hessen*, i. 256–257.

[3] Ambach, *Klage*, Bl. C.

The Nuremberg dramatist, Jacob Ayrer in a dramatic piece makes a peasant complain as follows:

I have a peasant-fleecing squire,
Myself and family he crushes down,
I scarce dare turn lest in his ire
Into a dungeon dark I should be thrown.
I have to serve him every day,
At my own plough I ne'er can stay;
Then if my rent I cannot pay
In such a passion he flies straight,
No, not one hour will he wait—
The greedy, money-hung'ring hound,
Three thalers once I owed him; Zounds,
So furious my squire grew
That to the butcher quick I flew
And sold one of my oxen twain.
Now came the ploughing time again,
The one ox would not draw the plough
Alone, and so I fetched my cow.
The raging tiger heard of this
And said that I had done amiss;
Ten gulden then he bade me pay—
I couldn't do so any way.[1]

The Basle professor Sebastian Münster, an excessively cautious writer in political and religious matters, pleaded the peasants' cause against the nobles in fervent language. 'The peasants,' he wrote in his cosmogony, 'lead a most wretched, down-trodden existence. Their houses are miserable huts of mud and wood, with no floors but the damp earth, covered only with straw. Their food is black rye bread, oat-meal porridge or boiled grain and lentils. Water and whey are almost their only beverages. A coarse smock frock, a pair of *Bundschuhs*, and a felt hat make up their attire. These people never have any rest, early and late they are hard at work. They are often obliged to serve their lords all through the year, to plough the fields,

[1] Ayrer's *Dramen*, published by Keller, iv. 2602.

sow the seeds, cut down the fruit and take it to the storehouses, hew wood and dig ditches. There is nothing that these poor creatures are not obliged to do, and they cannot leave off without [illegible]s to themselves.'[1]

Another '*Bauernklage*' of 1598 says: 'A very special and serious grievance for the peasant folk in German lands is the enormous increase of official people and of writers, who feed and fatten and cut a dash with money and land at the expense of the poor man. These harpies and blood-suckers are for ever inventing new dodges and tricks whereby they empty the sacks of the poor man to fill those of the princes and manorial proprietors, so that they may stand in high favour with the latter and not be punished by them when, in the teeth of all justice and fitness, they fleece and cheat the poor for their own benefit. A highly renowned theologian of the university of Leipzig assured me not long ago that his father had told him that the number of officials and clerks was not a quarter as large in his youth as it had become in his mature years, and that it was a veritable curse to the common people, of whom it was now said, and no wonder, "These are the years when the peasants shed tears."'[2]

'In bygone years,' wrote the Hessian government secretary Wigand Lauze in 1552, 'there was in many places only one official who fulfilled the various duties of rent-master, magistrate and police officer, and yet the duties were conscientiously performed; now, however, it has come to this, that in some places there is a rent-master, a rent-clerk, half a rent-clerk, a magistrate, an

[1] *Cosmographey* (Basle edition of 1588), Book III. ccccIxxix. a–b.

[2] *Bauernklage*, p. 8. (See above, p. 140, n. 3.)

assistant magistrate, two or three policemen, two or three toll-keepers, corn measurers, burgraves and many others besides.' All these sub-officials 'had no fixed yearly salaries, and had to be maintained by the vassals'; notwithstanding that the latter already had their hands more than full with their ordinary duties and expenses, fresh oppressive liabilities of this sort were continually imposed on them. 'For some of the officials are not content that the poor vassals should faithfully and punctually render them the old legitimate and traditional services, but whenever they take into their heads to build themselves great edifices, storehouses, pleasure-houses, &c., the peasants, if they wish to have any peace, are obliged to supply wood from their own hereditary groves, and even to wattle and dab the said pleasure-houses.'

'Likewise, some functionaries, not satisfied with having their fields worked and manured at the peasants' expense, buy up all the land that comes into the market. These new acquisitions must, like the former, be worked for nothing by the same poor peasants: I have seen as many as 25 ploughs at work on one such functionary's field. There is no single village without its reeve or burgomaster to whom the villagers must give unpaid service. If the princes and lords were to inform themselves thoroughly as to the way in which their poor people are treated, I believe they would often find that the services which they are obliged to perform for the officials greatly exceed those which they have to render the overlords themselves.'

Often and often a poor man 'the whole week through cannot get a single day to work for himself, and, so it 's wonder enough when any of them have

even one gulden of their own. Many of them could scarcely buy a rag for their bodies or store a loaf in their houses. For the poor men to complain of these grievances was useless, and only served to increase the oppression. For the officials had plenty of ways and means of circumventing the petitioners; they had accomplices at court, according to the old maxim: '"Geselle, schone mein, wie ich dein, und bedenke dass wir in gleichen Schulden sind."' (Friend, spare me, as I spare you, and remember that we are in the same boat.) 'Sometimes too the officials seize the petition-bearers by the throat.' 'They put them in prison, and leave them there so long that they are glad enough to get out at any price and ready to promise never again to repeat the offence: and so many hands and feet are tied together.' There were indeed some good, honest officials, he said, and he himself knew a few such, but 'by far the greatest number fleeced and plagued the poor man after the fashion of the song: "Schäme dich für nichts, davon dir nutz mag widerfahren."' (Don't stop at anything from which profit may accrue to you.) 'In all the history of the world we scarcely read of anything like it; they are bent on being and having everything, while the poor people are to be given over to the flayer and to have and to keep nothing.'[1]

'When any one of these officials,' said the Hessian Superintendent George Nigrinus in 1574 and 1582, 'has a hair's breadth of authority, he will not move a foot himself, all peasants must be at his beck and call. Of the gallows which stands at the entrance to hell it is said that all those come to it who hold an office and do not attend to it and make the most of it: Hence

[1] Lauze, ii. 409–418.

they prefer to do too much rather than too little. That is to say they do not scruple to give orders and command this and that in their Chief's name which had never even entered his head. As, for instance, the tax-gatherers, cellarers, magistrates, and foresters do, behaving as if the land were their own, and plaguing and draining the poor man in the name of their overlords.'[1]

'Could Egyptian bondage and servitude have been greater or more oppressive,' asks Nigrinus in another place, 'than that which is hung nowadays round the neck of the poor man? What sighs and groans daily fill the air!' The prophet Isaiah in his harangue against tyrants admirably described also the condition of things to-day, 'but, my dear Isaiah, don't you come to us in Germany and preach thus strongly to the great lords and tyrants, or you might soon have to take yourself off with a bloody pate; they would rend you not only with their speech but with their teeth.'[2]

No more than Wigand Lauze, in speaking up for the poor peasant, attacked the good, conscientious officials, did Nicodemus Frischlin, when in 1578 he delivered an address to the university of Tübingen in defence of the peasant class against the nobility, in any way include those of the nobles who showed themselves 'gracious and kind to the lower classes, who led respectable, sober lives at home and were honoured and respected abroad.' But the number of these, he said, was small compared to the 'cyclops and flint-skinners, the noble centaurs and inhuman monsters who behaved in a godless and inhuman way to the peasants.' 'What can be said of the brutal passions which those curmudgeons, those man-eaters or cannibals

[1] Nigrinus, *Daniel* (1574), pp. 29–30. [2] *Papistische Inquisition*, 726.

among the nobles, fly into with their peasants? For how many noble man-eaters are there in places where punishment is loosely administered, who have not beaten to death, or nearly so, many an innocent peasant? Did you ever hear that they were tortured or hanged for their murders?

'Well, well, whatever class you may belong to, if, indignant at any such offence of a peasant fleecer, you set yourself to avenge it, may God forsake me if all the other peasant fleecers do not hang together like a chain and stir up against you alone a mutiny such as we read of in the time of Catiline at Rome. If you know one of these you know them all: they all speak in chorus: with such curmudgeons it's all one and the same: one is guilty of the deed and all the rest defend him. Verily the princes, or still better the Emperor, would be conferring a benefit on humanity if they would rid the world of such inhuman monsters with their horses, castles, and all their belongings, and if when they caught them in wicked deeds they would no longer suffer them to enjoy their noble names in any other way than that of being the most exalted personages on the most exalted wheel of torture, as before these times that excellent man Erasmus did indeed well suggest.' [1]

A most flagrant instance of the way in which tyrannical peasant fleecers, though most severely condemned in a court of law, were backed up and protected by all their own class, occurred in the Tyrol in 1568.

Bartlmä von Lichtenstein, at the castle Karneid,

[1] Strauss, *Frischlin*, 179–182. The Tübingen professor John George Sigwart, in 1603, gave as a specimen of the language used by the nobles concerning the peasants: 'We will make the peasants poor and help them to go to heaven, and may the devil fetch them then.' Sigwart, 122$^{b}$–123.

had been put in prison at Innsbruck by the Archduke Ferdinand II. on account of inhuman treatment of his vassals. In the lawsuit conducted against him the evidence brought forward referred to no less than ninety-five different grounds of accusation. The procurator summed up the case as follows: 'He has been guilty of criminal offences with women, he has caused much cruel suffering to respectable people, sparing neither youth nor age, torturing them with thumb-screws, cruel imprisonment, very meagre diet, freezing of their bodies, punishing them after their imprisonment with stripes, blows, thrashings, &c., so much so that many of them were quite disabled and reduced to begging; for their imprisonment he even charged them great costs; without a vestige of right he introduced new ground-taxes or raised existing ones, and arbitrarily seized all unappropriated commons; in short nobody could obtain justice from him, and everybody felt his tyranny.' During the hearing of witnesses many of his vassals showed their mutilated hands in order that the judge might see for himself that their finger-nails had dropped off in consequence of hard pinching. To subject pregnant women to the rack gave especial delight to this monster. A maidservant who had survived the tortures of the rack was thrown by him into the horrible castle dungeon and left to suffer the pangs of hunger and the plague of vermin. When a compassionate associate of the unhappy girl wanted to take her some food which she had saved from her own supply, she was unfortunately met on the steps by the son of the wretch Bartlmä, who did not fall short of his father in barbarity to the vassals, and who was also guilty of the grossest excesses against the Church and the most holy Sacrament of

the Altar. The young man knocked the food out of the girl's hand and gave it to his dog to eat. A few days later the half-putrefied corpse of the poor prisoner was found in the castle cistern. Bartlmä had been in prison for eight months, and sentence of loss of all his estates was about to be passed against him, but on the application of the nobles' tribunal at Bozen he was let off on the sole condition that he should not take revenge on those who had given evidence against him: the tribunal was to deliver the judgment. Before, however, the decision had been pronounced the Archduke suddenly upset the whole proceedings, for the knight of Lichtenstein, although he had already committed fresh offences, had found 'powerful friends'; and now, for all his sins, his sole punishment was a fine of 1000 gulden to be paid to the territorial prince. The governor, much to the disgust of many people, gave the guilty man every possible help. Among the members of his own class, although this lawsuit was described in the law documents as a more atrocious one than had ever been heard of in the land, his knightly honour and reputation were so far from forfeited by it, that for a long time afterwards important and confidential posts were entrusted to him; up to the year 1579 he was governor of part of the Tyrol, and up to 1582 an assessor of taxes.[1]

In Bavaria conditions were on the whole better than in North Germany;[2] nevertheless there also there

[1] Hirn, ii. 7-11.

[2] ** This view was put forward by Grupp, *Niedergang*, 119 ff. See also *Histor.-polit.*, Bl. 120, p. 660 ff. 'For various reasons manorial properties could not be developed in the South in the same way as in the North. For one thing, manorial land was never so much enclosed in the South, but consisted of disjointed parcels, nor was there so much export business

occurred frequent violent outbursts of hatred from the ill-used peasants towards their aristocratic oppressors. In 1581, for instance, the last scion of the ancient race of Grünbeck at Niederhausen was put to death by his own peasantry; and at the same date a Günzkofer at Heybach, and a Preysinger at Berg in the Gäu, were also killed by their peasants.[1] There were at that time in Bavaria only a few peasants left who had independent property of their own and any wealth to speak of. The times had long gone by when numbers of large peasant proprietors could have sent yearly to the market 2000 pigs and 200 cows.[2] Almost the whole of the peasantry were beholden for their lands to the secular and spiritual lords of the manor and burdened with heavy dues, taxes, and services. In consequence of the continual rise in taxes which had gone on for half a century, and that chiefly at the expense of the peasants and burghers, and also by reason of

in the South as in the North. Then also the groundlords were for the most part ecclesiastics, or corporations; in Bavaria, for instance, 73 per cent. of the ground property belonged to convents. Finally the territorial legislation in the South did not allow the same freedom as that of the North. The territorial princes were less dependent on the manorial lords; only serfs could be compelled to take farms and remain on them; the obligation to find guarantors never existed. The services of the peasants could never be increased and compulsory household service for their children existed only in a very limited degree. The manorial lords, or *Hofmarkherren*, as they were called, endeavoured to procure labour by means of small peasant settlers (cottagers) and day-labourers; but the legislation of the land forbade repeatedly during the years 1553 to 1605 the breaking-up of manorial properties and covering them with cottages. It was also attempted to prevent day-labourers from settling down on the land for fear of their becoming dependent on public maintenance and also encroaching on the common pastures. Thus there ensued a great dearth of labour, and the groundlords lost their zest for turning out peasants.'

[1] Sugenheim, *Bayerns Kirchen- und Volkszustände*, 471. Note 1, 243.

[2] V. Koch-Sternfeld, 'Beiträge' iii. 383.

the depression in trade and industry things had come to such a pass that in 1593 the Provincial Estates represented to the ducal government that: 'Since the year 1577 the vassals had given up twelve times the twentieth part of their capital; the peasants with their wives and children could no longer keep from beggary; many of them already lacked bodily food; they could no longer stock their land with horses and cattle and keep it in the necessary condition of cultivation. Actions for debt came almost daily before the law courts; in the inventories of the legacies of the dead there was seldom anything but debts.' [1] Three years later insurrections occurred here and there among the peasants, especially in the district of Burghausen and in the county of Haag; they were, however, promptly put down by the sternest measures, confiscation, and punishment by torture.[2]

On the other hand, the peasant risings which took place in the years 1594–1597 all over Lower and Upper Austria assumed a very dangerous character. The agrarian grievances brought forward at that period by the peasants against their groundlords, and the consequent proceedings at the imperial court give a deep insight into the agricultural life of those lands, and merit, therefore, fuller treatment.

King Ferdinand I. had repeatedly, in the years 1541, 1542, and 1552, issued ordinances for the protection of the peasants: he had insisted that they were to be paid the proper market price for the produce of their farms; that no usurious forestalling was to be carried on to their detriment, above all they were not to be compelled to

[1] Wolf, *Maximilian der Erste*, i. 112, 115.
[2] Wolf, i. 374. Czerny, 193, n. 1.

give their overlords the first chance of buying the fruits, &c., which they wanted to sell, that is to say, to sell them at a price lower than the market price. There were groundlords who sent the peasants' farm-produce as well as their own, when the corn was rising in price, to the market by the peasants—the cartage being exacted as a due to the landlord (*Robot*)—and actually insisted that the latter 'should bring back a fixed price and make up the deficiency out of their own pockets.' [1] All this was forbidden on pain of severe punishment. A measure, on the other hand, which the Provincial Estates in 1563 had extorted from the Emperor for raising the Turkish aid, was in the highest degree oppressive to the peasants. To the request of the Estates that he would 'set no limit to the overlords' privilege of *Robotung* (exacting unpaid service) over their peasants,' Ferdinand, at any rate, only agreed under the following proviso: 'If a manorial lord oppresses his vassals beyond their means and beyond ancient usage with quite unbearable burdens and socages it shall be permitted to the said vassals to complain at the imperial tribunal, or at some other suitable place, to the appointed magistrates, and to ask that their complaints should be looked into.' [2]

But the manorial lords troubled themselves very little about such complaints; very many of them not only increased the existing services, but also made other exactions without measure or rule: what to the peasants seemed intolerable in the way of 'burdens and feudal services' these gentlemen thought 'very mild and lenient.' Out of the concession made to landlords in 1563 that the peasants 'should also be bound to offer those of their

[1] Bucholtz, viii. 256-257. [2] *Ibid.* 301-302.

children who were fit for household service, and who were not needed by their parents or relations, first of all to the overlords in preference to anyone else, and for suitable remuneration,' [1] there grew up a system of compulsory domestic service which was most crushingly oppressive for the peasants.

In Lower Styria, Carniola, and Croatia, as early as 1573 the growing burdens of ground-vassalage led to violent uprisings which were only put down with difficulty and with bloodshed, and which did not lead to the abolition of the grievances. When the Protestant Provincial Estates, in order to frighten him, represented to Archduke Charles in 1580 that 'suspicious-looking people from the Salzburg district were passing through the land, and that by their unscrupulous talk they might easily stir up the peasants to a fresh outbreak,' the only answer they got was that 'the peasants were too well satisfied to remain in peaceable possession of their homesteads, to be stirred up by mere words; undoubtedly, however, they might easily be moved to rebellion by the endless socages, the gratuities wrung from them, the harshly enforced death duties, the inordinate punishments inflicted on them; instead of spying out mere talk the Estates would do better to see that the vassals were not so cruelly burdened, and that their poverty was alleviated.' [2]

Many of the landlords may certainly be credited with sentiments such as were uttered by Wolf von Stubenberg when in 1500 he admonished his sons as follows: 'Behave generously to the poor, protect them from taxes, and do not take the death oxen; give gladly for the love of

[1] Bucholtz, viii. 285.

[2] Hurter, *Gesch. Ferdinands II.*, vol. ii. 310–311.

God,' and by Joseph von Lamberg, High Chamberlain to the Empress and afterwards Governor in Carniola († 1554), who taught his children thus :

> Crush not the poor man down, my son,
> Let justice unto him be done.
> Widows and orphans well protect,
> No one illegally eject.[1]

What the general state of things was, however, may be gathered from the words addressed by Archduke Charles to his Estates. He said : ' Owing to the tyrannical, unchristian, insupportable and crushing oppression to which the poor are subjected, I am daily importuned with piteous complaints and entreaties for help and redress ; if no improvement takes place it will not be surprising if in the end all goes to ruin in the land, or God Almighty will take pity from on high on the poor people oppressed against all right and reason, and visit the land with fearful punishments.' [2]

When in the yeārs 1594–1597 the peasants in Lower and Upper Austria rose up in wild revolt they announced emphatically that ' they had only banded together to put

[1] Wolf, *Geschichtl. Bilder aus Österreich*, 115. There is a benevolent spirit also in the rules of life which Bartelme Khevenhüller laid down for his eldest son in 1607. ' Spare the poor and help the poor,' he says among other things, ' be full of love towards the good and pious vassals, punish the bad ones first with words, then with imprisonment, not with money fines, lest their wives and children who are innocent should starve. For all the benefits you confer on them God will reward you. Be merciful in all things, condemn no one to death ; be kindly affectioned to the poor, for you eat of their alms, and what you give to them will be doubled unto you again. What God gives you on earth, and all that you enjoy, wife, children, cattle, house, farm, &c., &c., is not your own ; you are only stewards of it all. Keep good discipline among your vassals ; take no gifts from them ; spare them expenses and superfluous taxation ' (pp. 139–141).

[2] Hurter, ii. 536.

a stop to the great innovations which had been foisted on the poor people during the last thirty years,' or as they expressed it on another occasion, 'to put down all innovations which within the memory of man had been introduced by the rulers.'[1]

In many of its characteristics, in the mixture of complaints both of a religious and an agrarian nature, in the stirring up of the peasants by ringleaders from the ranks of moral and social outcasts, in enforced co-operation of peasants who had no cause of complaint against their overlords and who would not willingly have joined in the revolt, in the demand for 'Swiss freedom,' and the abolition of all taxes and services made by numbers of peasant bands, no less than in the crimes and devastation perpetrated, this peasant war reminds us throughout of the great social revolution of 1525.[2]

'But if it be asked,' says a pamphlet of the year 1598, 'who was chiefly to blame for all the misfortune, war, misery and ruin which happened in Austria, by which innumerable people were visited and impoverished, thousands turned into widows and orphans, and so forth, one can only answer: the many squires and overlords who treated their vassals like serfs, heaping on them as on beasts of burden intolerable loads, are the chief people to be blamed. Who could count up all the endless burdens with which these poor oppressed,

[1] Raupach, *Evangel. Österreich*, 192 ff., and *Erläutertes Österreich*, iii. 114 ff.

[2] Fuller details are given by Czerny, p. 12 ff. Another point of resemblance between the two rebellions is that many of the nobles, so long as things went against the priests, not only let the insurgents alone, but even promised their support (cf. p. 721). 'Had not the matter become so serious,' wrote a news-reporter, 'one might well have laughed at the peasant war, for this lather had been poured out for the Catholics, and now the evangelicals themselves were being washed in it' (p. 101).

fleeced people are for the most part overwhelmed, without any justice or mercy ? ' [1]

The insurgents below the Enns who did not bring forward complaints about religious annoyances stated, among other things, in a gravamen sent by them to the imperial tribunal at Prague, that ' the groundlords were never tired of devising fresh burdens; it was they themselves who, by their oppression of orphans, drove the vassals to insurrection. They appropriated the legacies of the fatherless children, and when the latter had reached adult age they established them on their estates and farms as labourers, and used them so badly that they ran away; in punishment of which the overlords kept possession of their land. If the peasants had grown-up children capable of work, who might maintain them in their old age, they were obliged to give them up in socage to their overlords; if by abominable treatment they were driven to flight, the parents were expected to receive them back; if they were not in a position to do so they were themselves punished in body and goods. Formerly it was the excellent custom that persons considered punishable should be cited before a law court, examined and sentenced by the judge and the assessors; now, however, the overlord takes the law into his own hands and pronounces judgment with regard to his own purse; where formerly a matter of 1–2 gulden was paid, now 30–40 gulden must be forked out; there is no more any question of legality for the villagers. Any complaints sent in by them to the higher courts remain in abeyance and are never settled. The burgraves and officials fleece the peasants and enrich themselves.

[1] *Bauernklage* (see above, p. 140, n. 3).

Many an official who has entered on his post with only 10 gulden in his pocket, becomes in a couple of years the possessor of 2000 gulden in cash and buys the best houses, mills and estates, which obviously can only have come about at the expense of the peasants. At the harvest socages in former times the peasants were given food and drink and also a small tip; nowadays they do not even get a "thank you," much less any payment in money. Formerly they paid 4 kreuzer for each fruit tree, now they must pay 18 kreuzer, which is exorbitant. The "house gulden," or a gulden on every house, is very onerous. If a peasant buys a house he is obliged to pay 10 gulden for registration, which was not the custom formerly, besides which the overlords count up the purchase money and take one kreuzer from every gulden for themselves.' Of many other newly introduced burdens the peasants of Lower Austria also made complaint.[1]

The peasants above the Enns, who demanded the right of free exercise of the Augsburg Confession, brought forward the same complaints in secular matters. In the first place they complained of the 'freeing money' exacted by the groundlords in the event of a death and on property changing hands among the living. 'At first the rulers exacted this *Freigeld* on immovable goods only, not on movable ones, and only in case of purchase; now they had invented three or four sorts of death duties, besides other innumerable taxes, so much so that a third or a half of the peasants' capital went to the manorial lords. With some of the latter, things had come to such an unchristian pass that

[1] Th. Wiedemann, *Gesch. der Reformation und Gegenreformation im Lande unter der Enns*, i. 496–498.

a wife whose husband had died must again redeem the whole property at the rate of 10 gulden on every 100, as the case might be; if she married again, the new husband must again for the third time pay 10 gulden on 100; if the father or mother wanted to make over the property to their children for a moderate price, they were not allowed to do so by the overlords; the property must be valued by experts and the *Freigeld* paid on the price they fixed.' Among the chief points of complaint were the following: 'Many rulers take away from the vassals the original title-deeds referring to their property, alter them, keep the old ones and give them new ones which are full of new manorial exactions, and they charge heavy fees for their work into the bargain. Other overlords raise the taxes and services of their vassals in opposition to the express contents of the title-deeds.' Quite intolerable is the manner in which stewards, court secretaries, servants and officials, incessantly raise and add to the tale of clerks' fees: the petitioners begged that a definite and reasonable tax should be fixed, and a curb put on the sharpers by whom the peasants were so hardly and culpably treated. Very oppressive also were the compulsory payments for food at weddings and other festive gatherings, as well as the enforced sale, at a cheap rate, of all their orchard and farm produce to the overlords. As regards the socages, numbers of peasants had to do service either with cart and horse or with their own hands and bodies, twenty, thirty, or even more days every year, and this usually at a time when they ought to be working on their own farms; they had to leave their own business at a standstill and procure for the overlords wine, lime,

corn, bricks, stones, and other things, besides taking with them fodder as well. While parents were compelled to give their children, as though they were bondsmen, against their will into the service of the overlords, they themselves were often obliged to hire strangers to work for them. The newly enacted tithe ordinance was most damaging to the peasants: 'the tithable people did not dare cut down or gather in their corn and fruit, which they had been obliged to work at the whole year through, without the consent of the tithes-owner; and they had to leave the corn when it was cut lying in the field until the latter had, at his own convenience, taken away his tithes, although it frequently happened that when the last quantity was cut down the first had already been spoilt by storms. Some of the overlords took double tithes, especially of hay and after-grass, or when the field was already bare, or planted with turnips, a tithe of these had to be given them; the peasants were actually burdened with the wretched tithe on garden produce, hemp, and flax, besides geese, chickens, eggs, and so forth. The tithe-owners also claimed tithes on the ground area on which a house or a shed was built, whereas from time immemorial tithes had never been paid on bare ground, but only on the corn grown on the land. Of old the tithe-owner had always taken fair payment in money from the tithable person, or else taken the tenth part of the corn honestly from the barn.'[1]

At the imperial court long and wearisome transactions were carried on with a view to stopping the insurrection. That the peasants' taxes had been raised the Estates could not deny, but in justification of this step

[1] Czerny, 363–369.

they represented to the Emperor that: 'It was impossible to put taxation back on its old footing since prices had doubled and trebled. Moreover, they said, the peasants' complaints were so vague and undefined that they could not proceed to legal action concerning them. The peasants had no right to assert that their revolt was caused by fresh burdens imposed on them; for even if some of the overlords had been somewhat exacting to their vassals, this had not been the case with them all.' [1]

How much of it all had really happened, however, and how true and well founded the most serious of the complaints were, came clearly to light: for instance, that the groundlords had really been guilty of taking away and arbitrarily altering their peasants' title-deeds. 'Such alterations as the interpolation of the death and transfer duties and other innovations in the new title-deeds substituted for the old ones,' said the Emperor, 'were wrong and unjust and must be put a stop to.' [2] That the complaint of inordinate increasing of the transfer duties was also not imaginary, investigation proved in many cases. From one property, valued at 1400 gulden, 300 gulden had been paid: at first the widow, on taking over the property at her husband's death, had had to pay the transfer duty; immediately after, on transferring the property to other hands, she had been obliged to pay the same amount again, and when a short time after she herself died the children had again to pay the tax on the maternal property. Some of the groundlords, when a wife or a husband died, claimed as their due 10 gulden on each 100 gulden, and on the sale or transfer to other hands not

[1] Häberlin, xx. 469. [2] Czerny, 281.

only the same sum again but also 5 per cent. as '*Anlait*,' whereby not only the movable but also the immovable property was taxed, but without previous deduction of the outstanding debts. Other groundlords took from properties, which had already been redeemed at 10 per cent. on death or purchase, still another 10 per cent. when the moneys passed to another overlord; likewise they claimed from moneys in Chancery which had already been diminished by 10 per cent. death duty, and from marriage dowries within and without the manorial estate, another 10 gulden on every 100. 'A vassal,' said the nobles of the Hausruck, 'may give his child as marriage portion up to 30 gulden free of tax; but if he gives more he is bound to pay 1 gulden for every 10.'[1]

'The peasants,' said the manorial lords of the Marchland, 'would be well able to meet the demands of their overlords if only they were not allowed to give more than 30 gulden as wedding portions, or to spend more than 30 gulden in wedding festivities, or to give more than 5 gulden a year to each male-servant and 3 gulden to each maid-servant, or to wear fine clothes; they should not be allowed to buy cloth which costs more than 12 kreuzer the ell.'[2]

George Erasmus, Baron von Tschernembl, who later on, with the brothers Gottfried and Richard von Starhemberg, formed the 'Calvinistic Triumvirate' in Upper Austria, a keen representative of the 'overlord claims' on the peasants, spokesman for the groundlords at the imperial court, expressed himself as follows in a private letter: 'To exact death and transfer taxes from movable goods also is, to speak the truth, neither in

[1] Czerny, 180, 288, 290.

[2] *Ibid.* 15, note.

accordance with civil law nor with the territorial usage of other provinces.'[1] All the same, the overlords themselves would not give up this claim: to do so, they said, would mean the depopulation and ruin of the land. If a portion of the vassals had old title-deeds, so that in some places the transfer tax on movable goods, or the *Robot*, have never been customary, the charters could now no longer be recognised as valid, since by their insurrection they had forfeited honour, life, goods and chattels. If any peasant had an old charter, on the strength of which he was exempt from transfer taxes, and yet through long custom such taxes had been established, the letter of the title-deed ought to be disregarded and the custom upheld.[2]

Next to the transfer taxes the *Robot* was one of the chief grounds of complaint from the peasants. With the convents this socage only extended, as a rule, to from two to eight days or services in the year; but with the secular estates, on the contrary, it covered as much as twenty-six days; for twenty-four days at the least, they demanded of the imperial tribunal, the vassals were to be bound to render *Robot* socage.[3]

As compared with the *Robot* socages of the peasants in Pomerania, Brandenburg, Mecklenburg, and other North German districts, these exactions were very moderate.[4]

At first there was anything but a favourable feeling in the imperial court towards the 'manorial demands'; their unchristian and tyrannical nature was represented to the Estates. But by means of handsome bribes, which with some wealthy persons amounted to 500

[1] Czerny, 180, 308.
[2] *Ibid.* 309–311.
[3] *Ibid.* 290, 291.
[4] See our remarks above, p. 144 ff.

ducats, they were able to win over influential friends and patrons.[1] By an imperial resolution the *Robot* was reduced to fourteen days and the burden of the transfer taxes was lightened, but, on the whole, this tax was still to be paid on movable as well as on immovable goods. Cattle and fruits were still as before to be first offered at a cheap rate to the groundlords. Concerning compulsory household service, the increase in tithes on field and garden, clerks' fees, and other peasant grievances, the court did not go into detail.

After the risings in Lower and Upper Austria had been forcibly put down in 1597, the insurgents disarmed, and numerous executions carried out, the peasants were left at the mercy of the manorial proprietors.[2] The

[1] Czerny, 163, 175, 195, 307 note, 312 note.

[2] *Ibid.* 313 ff. (** Huber, iv. 306 ff.) Even if it was also proved by the examination instituted by the imperial plenipotentiaries that the peasants in many cases had made unfounded charges against their overlords, it can by no means be deduced from this fact that after the suppression of the revolt they no longer dared bring forward their grievances, that the latter had been 'very seldom justifiable, or at any rate of a very unimportant nature' (Czerny, 353). After they had been beaten down to the ground it was incumbent on the peasant to avoid everything which might provoke the wrath and vengeance of the manorial proprietors. When Wolf William von Volkensdorf, during the negotiations at Prague, was sent by the Estates of Upper Austria to the commander-in-chief Morawski, the suppressor of the insurrection below the Enns, he satisfied himself at all points that the general had achieved a splendid work, that the peasants almost went down on their knees, and took off their hats when they saw anyone in the furthest distance; 'but,' he added, 'one also sees a great many of them who are keeping guard over the pears on the pear-trees, for he (Morawski) drags with him 140 peasants, of whom he has some executed daily, while others are continually being brought in' (*l.c.* 313). Could the minutely worded peasant complaints brought forward in 1597 by the imperial commission at Zwettl against eleven groundlords be in the main unfounded? Those, for instance, of the peasants of Rapportenstein and of the district of Langensalza against the baron of Landau, that all the taxes and services had been enormously raised—that it was only thirteen or fourteen years ago that the house

latter laid claim to all the soil and territory in the land as their own 'rightful property'; and to the assurance of the peasants again and again reiterated, both in word and in writing, that they would by no means refuse the taxes necessary to the territorial prince, they simply made answer that 'the peasants had no call to make assurances of any sort with regard to the taxes; the Estates alone had the right to levy taxes on subjects, while the groundlords, by ancient right and privilege, were not bound to pay any taxes.' [1]

Amongst all the privileges and rights which the princes and lords claimed over the peasants, none had a more damaging influence nor was exercised so cruelly as that of unlimited chase.

At the beginning of the social revolution in 1524 the peasants had put forward as a fully justifiable

gulden had been levied; that the fee for taking or leaving a farm had formerly been not more than 24 kreuzer, whereas now it amounted to 2–4 gulden; that poor vassals who had formerly paid 7–8 kreuzer must now pay 2 gulden; that formerly the *Robot* had meant six days' manual labour, while now 'they had to attend whenever they were summoned,' and that without any allowance of food; that sons and daughters were forced into household service at the manors for a mere 'mockery of wages which did not even pay for mending their shoes,' and so forth. See some of the complaints in v. Hammer-Purgstall, Khlesl. i., *Urkundensammlung*, 245–248. How well the groundlords understood the art of increasing their 'manorial rights' is shown, for instance, by the notes of Erasmus von Rödern taken down at Perg, near Rohrbach, in the upper Mühlviertel. In the year 1601 he valued these rights at 2000 gulden, in 1604 at 6050 gulden, in 1605 at 8850 gulden. The amount realised by his 'court tavern' he put at the average yearly sum of 1000 gulden. The *Gült* (the money service and the different tithes) brought him in in 1601 only 183 gulden, but in 1606 as much as 440 gulden. Cf. the instructive and interesting pamphlet of L. Pröll, *Ein Blick in das Hauswesen eines österreichischen Landedelmanns aus dem ersten Viertel des 17ten Jahrhunderts* (Vienna, 1888), pp. 17, 19–20.

[1] Czerny, 299–300.

complaint that the rulers in some places preserved game to their (the peasants') immense loss and damage; that the unreasoning creatures devoured their corn, and that they were obliged to bear this in silence, which was contrary to the law of God and of neighbourly kindness. 'But what the country folk had had to bear before they set the German lands on fire with the insurrection was only a trifle compared to the tyrannous yoke which, after the suppression of the revolt, had been put on their necks through the chase and the chase socages.'[1]

'The princes and the great proprietors' looked upon themselves as the sole lords of the forest game; most of them claimed not only the higher chase of the red deer and black boars, but also the small chase of hares, foxes, birds and partridges; to the peasant almost every kind of hunting was forbidden. Not only were the manorial forests enclosed, but in many places even the private woods, while the parishioners were more and more shut out from their use. The pursuit of the chase, outraging all reason, was the chief cause of the decline of agriculture and the impoverishment of the peasants. By the continual extension of their pleasures in this direction the princes and lords brought the whole population into misery, so that there was justification for the question: Who were the best off, 'das lang gehegte und kurz gehetzte Wild, oder der stets gehetzte und nie gehegte Untertan'[2] (the long cherished and briefly tormented beast, or the long tormented and never cherished peasant)?

'The amount of loss, suffering, misery, oppression and ruin,' wrote Cyriacus Spangenberg from his own observation in 1560, 'which accrue to the poor peasants

[1] *Bauernklage* (1598), Bl. G. [2] Falke, *Kurfürst August*, 146.

through the chase, are not to be reckoned up. There is no sense of pity or mercy among the rulers, who will not believe this nor take the matter up. The animals tear up and devour all the corn and vegetables, destroy the seeds before they have come up, and devastate the land. The peasants are obliged to put up with this and dare not speak. Their cattle, calves, goats, sheep, geese and chickens, often even their children and their farm-servants, are injured by the horses and hounds, and no compensation is given them. Besides which, when the hunt is on they must let everything go, neglect their own business and endanger their bodies and lives, in order to attend their overlords. The great people race and gallop through their fields, meadows and gardens, after a hare, or a brace of partridges, or some other wild game, sparing nothing, not even the vines; the hedges are broken down, the vegetables trampled under foot, the corn trailed on the ground, the palings and vine poles knocked down, and everywhere immense damage done to the poor people. How is it possible for them under such circumstances to thrive and prosper? And when they have lost all and are ruined how can they pay and serve their overlords? Has anyone ever met with such injustice even among the heathen?' Spangenberg reminds the princes and lords of the maxim:

> To hunt for pleasure at cost of the poor
> Is a devil's delight, and nothing more.[1]

Even the princes who were most alert in the augmentation of their revenues and incomes, such as the Elector Augustus of Saxony, subordinated all other

[1] *Der Jag-Teufel, Theatr. Diabol.*, 255[b]; cf. 253. ** Osborn, *Teufels-literatur*, 152 f. Schwappach, ii. 618.

State and economic considerations to their hunting. Augustus enlarged the area of the territorial game preserves till it covered vast stretches of his electorate. The means which flowed in to him from the confiscation of Church property he used for the purchase of large noblemen's estates, whose extensive forests were specially adapted for enlarging the game preserves.[1] In order that the wild birds and game might conveniently disport themselves and feed among the fat fields and standing corn of the peasants he issued the command that fields were not to be enclosed. 'You are not ignorant,' he wrote to the receiver of taxes at Pirna on October 7, 1555, 'of the reasons for which it has been our will and pleasure to do away entirely with all the villages in our hunting domain in the mountains on the Bohemian frontier, and to remove them elsewhere; likewise on what conditions it was afterwards our pleasure to allow them to remain longer in the same place. Since, however, we instructed you, among other things, to pull down all the palings, hedges, fences, and so forth, which our subjects in the district of Königstein set up for the protection of their corn, and which hinder the free course of our wild game, though in some cases this has been done, we have nevertheless learnt that in and about the villages of Struppen and Leupoldsheim the hedges, palings and other obstructions are still left standing, we herewith instruct and command that all the said fences, &c., in the said villages shall at once be completely pulled down, and that you yourself shall see that it is done and shall not come away until all such obstructions have been entirely removed.' Later on he gave permission for the fencing in of fields, but ordered

[1] See Fraustadt, ii. 280–281, and ib. 305 ff.

the removal of all goats and dogs, excepting chained-up dogs, and laid on the peasants the obligations to keep, outside these enclosed fields, a few acres with good crops for the game, and in every village *Mark* to keep at least three fields, 300 ells in breadth, open for the game. The tenants in the district of Pirna had to sow every year 150 bushels of oats for the game and were only supplied with thirty-three bushels.[1] The mountain ore districts were also planted with crops for the wild game. How damaging to the peasants all these numerous game preserves were is seen from a report of the electoral councillor Komerstadt, who wrote to the Elector Augustus concerning a preserve stretching from Ebersbach to Kalkreuth and thence towards Hayer. He says: 'The sows had torn up the meadows as with a pick-axe; he had seen the people down on their knees putting back the clods of turf with their hands, not without murmurings in their hearts; over 1000 acres of grass land had been turned into game preserves, while at the same time the whole district, owing to the poverty and sandiness of the soil, lived by cattle-breeding; if the pasture land is destroyed whole villages will be ruined.'[2]

It was said among the people that the Elector must 'at times be under the spell of a specially evil spirit, since he allowed his vassals to be so cruelly used by unreasoning animals.' A baker from Stolpen stated that between Dresden and Stolpen, on the bridge in the moorland, he had met with a ghost which had charged him to petition the prince to do away with the wild game, which did so much damage to the peasants; for when a poor man had sown three or four bushels of corn

[1] Weber, *Kurfürstin Anna*, 264–267.
[2] Falke, *Kurfürst August*, 150.

he only reaped two; Augustus might at least allow the peasants to frighten away the game from their fields.[1]

The amount of damage that the game was capable of doing may be measured by their quantity. On October 4, 1562, the Elector, according to his own statement, in one single hunt on the Dresden heath, brought down '539 wild swine, 52 of which were boars over five years old.'

On December 30, 1563, he complained that 'because the boars, owing to dearth of fodder, were not nearly fat enough, he had been obliged to give up further hunting, after killing, however, 1226 animals, including 200 pigs, 500 two-year-old boars, and 526 quite young ones.'[2] In 1565, during the shooting season, he shot 104 stags with his own hand; the following year he killed 330.[3] At the hunts of November 1585 no less than 1532 wild boars were killed.[4] The Elector Christian I., in 1501, during the season when the harts are fat, killed 227 stags, 127 deer, and a number of other wild animals.[5] On September 19, 1614, 'a wild beast hunt through the Elbe' was organised. The list of animals killed includes 28 stags, 19 does, 9 two-year-old boars, 10 roes, 6 'Kegler' (?), 2 five-year-old boars, and so forth. The banks of the Elbe were laid with nets, the game was driven into the river and shot from the pontoon shed, while the court looked on from the banks.[6]

[1] Weber, *Kurfürstin Anna*, 297.
[2] *Ibid.* 242.
[3] Falke, *Kurfürst August*, 152.
[4] Müller, *Annales*, 204.
[5] *Ibid.* 207.
[6] A picture on the walls of the Saxon hunting-castle Moritzburg represents this wild boar chase. Richard, *Krell*, ii. 333. When the Emperor Matthias was in Dresden in 1617 he, in company with the whole electoral court retinue, looked on from the town-hall for five hours at

In the year 1617 Philip Hainhofer saw in the newly built hunting-house in Alt-Dresden, 200 wagons for the transport of cloths, nets and yarn, with which 'fifteen miles of road could be netted.'[1] 'Nearly every year brought a blessing in game to the prince's kitchen' quite independently of the enormous quantity of game which was not killed by the Elector in person, but sent in by the many court and country hunt-masters, foresters and gamekeepers.[2] A hunt retinue consisted sometimes of 4000 or 5000 men.[3]

In the duchy of Saxony 'the royal chase went on as furiously and with equal mercilessness to the poor people.' The complaints of the peasants over the terrible ravages of the wild game found as little hearing as did those of the forest officials that, owing to the inordinate quantity of game the trees could not attain to proper development. The pastor and the magistrate at Jena complained bitterly. The wild animals, they said, eat up the young seedlings, and the fresh shoots in the vines; many a poor man had to leave off work in his fields, or meadows, or vineyards, because he did not dare frighten away the game; also pointed palings round the vine crops were no longer allowed on account of the game. 'The *wild* game are losing their right to their name,' wrote the court-preacher Stolz, 'and are becoming as tame as a herd of cattle; they trot out of the woods into the meadows, fields, vineyards, and

'the merry hunt going on on the *Platz*.' 'Eight large bears, 10 stags, 4 heads of game, 10 wild hogs and 17 badgers were, one after another, baited and killed, and finally 3 fine martens shot down by the Elector from the tall fir-trees which had been set up.' Opel, *Anfänge der Zeitungs presse*, 70–71.

[1] *Baltische Studien*, ii. Heft ii. 141.

[2] Glafey, 960.

[3] Müller, *Forschungen*, i. 31.

gardens, forget their normal food which God has provided for them in the forests, and devour, trample on, ravage and destroy what has grown up for the use of man.' It is to the honour of the preachers at court as well as to those in the towns and villages situated in the game-preserving districts that, as Duke John Frederick II. wrote, 'they often inveighed fiercely from the pulpits against the terrible way in which the animals damaged the poor people's field and garden produce; the people did not dare set foot in their own woods for fear of disturbing the game, still less make any use of them.' After a time, however, the preachers were forbidden to plead the cause of the people.[1]

'In the department of the chase,' so the Weimar councillors informed Duke Frederick William in 1590, 'there was a great deal of unnecessary expense in servants, food, carriage, and other things.' For if a stag cost 100 fl. it was an expensive pleasure to say the least. 'Then everybody is complaining that the quantity of game on the Ettersberg, belonging to your Grace, is doing so much harm to the trees that it is to be feared the manorial forest will soon be turned into meadow land. What the poor suffer from damage to their corn, and whence they are to procure rent, taxes, and other things, is not easy to imagine.'[2]

Duke George Ernest of Henneberg, a 'furious hunter,' who in 1581 killed no fewer than 1003 red deer,[3] received the following protest from his councillors: 'To your Grace's extreme and almost blamable injury it has been found that up to the present day the chase is the root and cause of all the damage and ruin

[1] Kius, *Forstwesen*, 182, 186–190. [2] Moser's *Patriotisches Archiv*, iii. 285.
[3] Landau, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Jagd*, 251–252.

sustained in the lordship of Henneberg. For, not to speak of the inordinate burden which is laid on the poor subjects by the daily hunting, it is patent to all that with such evils and annoyances going on neither government, nor housekeeping, nor any order of any sort can be maintained. All household and government affairs, and the ruler himself, are at the mercy of unreasoning wild animals. Everything must give way to the chase. Consultations on important affairs are held at any inconvenient time, eating and drinking takes place at odd moments, and so with everything else: all day long kitchens and cellars stand open, and what is worst of all, the whole mind, thoughts, and will of our ruler are so set on the daily pursuit of the ruinous chase that hunting and killing animals has come to be regarded as a delight and as a remedy for casual illnesses. From which, besides the above-mentioned disorder, it also follows that year after year this kind of delight must be enjoyed and pursued in almost all districts, whereby every district is consumed by itself.'[1]

The same state of things prevailed in other districts. The Elector John George of Brandenburg wrote in 1579 to the Landgrave William of Hesse that he had caught and shot 436 stags, 190 head of wild game, 4 bears, 1363 boars, and 150 foxes.[2] In 1581 the number of his trophies amounted to 679 stags, 968 head of game, 26 wild calves, and over 500 boars.[3] From Easter 1594 to Easter 1598 the Elector himself shot 2350 stags and 2651 does.[4] When the Landgrave William of Hesse was on a visit to the Elector in 1589 he wrote from Küstrin that at one of the hunts got up for him by his

[1] Landau, ii.
[2] Moehsen, *Beiträge*, 94, note.
[3] Landau, 250.
[4] *Märkische Forschungen*, iii. 359.

host he had killed 60–70 stags, without counting the wild game, and on another occasion 100 stags.[1]

In his own country William was no less fortunate. In 1579 his hunting booty was 900 wild boars.[2] But this number was small in comparison to the feats of the Landgrave Philip.[3] In 1559 Philip wrote to Duke Christopher of Würtemberg: 'At this boar-hunt we had fine sport with our young dogs and caught over 1120 boars. 'We had intended to have 60 more field days, but as we found that the boars had become thin, we did not go on hunting.' In 1560, 1274 boars were killed, in 1563 as many as 2572, and yet the area of these hunts had been confined to different portions of the small landgraviate. In 1560, even before the expiration of the hunting season, Philip killed 60 stags; from June 1 to August 1, 1561, he shot 81 stags and trapped 96, and hoped to shoot 40 more and chase 60. The snow and the cold of the winter of 1570–1571 destroyed such a large quantity of red deer and other game that the loss was estimated at 3000 head in the Reinhardswald alone. In 1582 the Landgrave William of Hesse carried off a booty of 261 stags and 391 head of game; his brother killed 280 stags and 483 deer; in the following year these numbers were almost doubled, and from year to year the booty was equally large.[4]

In Hesse also the farmers were not allowed to protect themselves against the damage done by the game. 'It

[1] Landau, 254.

[2] Moehsen, 94, note.

[3] ** During his captivity (1547–1550) 'the Landgrave Philip turned his attention more to compensation for the game damages than to the diminution of game' (ii. 623).

[4] Landau, 247–253. Still further details at 232–240. Cf. Weber, *Aus vier Jahrhunderten*, i. 464.

was shameful,' said Landgrave Philip, 'that the peasants should refuse to let his game go into their fields when he allowed their cows to be in his forests.' Thus the peasants, in return for the right of pasture in the forests, were to give up their fields to the wild game.[1] In 1566, at a Provincial Diet at Cassel, the Estates complained of the 'tremendous mischief done by the great, fat game animals which they were not even allowed to drive away with small dogs.' Three years later they repeated their complaint. 'It was a general grievance,' they said, 'that the princes' wild game did so much harm by overrunning and trampling down the crops.' The peasants were neither allowed to drive off the animals nor to fence in their fields, meadows and gardens, and yet they were expected at the time of tax-collecting to pay the groundlords in good fruit, &c. 'For their comfort the Estates were answered that the lords who had the cares of government on their shoulders must be provided with sustenance: they had better look round and see what went on in other countries.'[2] In the hunting district round the town of Cassel the populace were forbidden under severe penalty to snare the hares, 'and consequently these animals ran about the gardens everywhere almost tame.'[3] To the Landgrave Ludwig V. the parishes of the district of Lichtenberg and the villages of Niederramstadt, Treysa and Waschenbach sent in the following complaint: 'Although the land, and our districts in the mountains especially, no longer yields such abundant produce as formerly, nevertheless the small supplies which God Almighty vouchsafes to bring forth from the fields yearly for the maintenance

[1] Landau, 7. [2] Rommel, *Neuere Gesch. von Hessen*, i. 252, 255.
[3] Landau, 269.

of human life would be sufficient for our wants, and would enable us better to bear our common burdens, if it were not for the wild animals which of late years have preyed on our fields and meadows in such quantities, and which go on multiplying from year to year, and which in spite of our yelling, screaming and watching break through the fences often in broad daylight, without any timidity, and ravage fruit vines and corn. Also what the stags may happen to spare in the vineyards and the orchards the wild boars make havoc of, so that the poor people's labour is all toil and trouble in vain, with great and irretrievable loss. Oftentimes with all his bleeding sweat the peasant cannot earn enough to give his children daily bread during half the year, still less has he time for the needful farm work, and most certainly he cannot fulfil your Grace's expectations in the matter of yearly rent, dues and taxes.' The petitioners ended with the assurance that if this condition of things was not ameliorated they should be obliged to leave their land to go to ruin, and cease from agricultural labour.[1] Ludwig, however, took no notice of these complaints. Whosoever spoke against his wild game 'hit him in the apple of his eye, so dear to him was it and the chase, that he cared for nothing and no one else.'[2] It was a byword in the land of Hesse that next to the princes 'the unreasoning animals were the lords of the land.'

In Franconia these 'unreasoning animals' caused such devastation that in 1580 the persecuted peasants declared they would bear it no longer, they would rather let everything go to rack and ruin and even face starvation. The Landgrave William of Hesse feared

[1] Landau, 147–148. [2] *Ibid.* 15.

that in his land also the same sort of mutiny might arise, and warned his brother 'to remember and consider well that the beginnings of the peasant war were first seen in Franconia.' From twelve Franconian lordships the peasants, under the lead of the Syndicus of Nuremberg, sent twelve delegates to the imperial court, to obtain from the supreme head of the empire help and rescue from their bondage. The Emperor espoused their cause and issued stringent orders to the Franconian overlords, especially to the Margrave of Ansbach-Bayreuth, that they were not to make game preserves and covers anywhere but on their own property, ground, and soil, as was decreed by the common law, and not to allow such preserves and covers to be a source of damage and loss to others. 'No one shall be forbidden,' he said, 'to protect his ground and possessions, as best he can, against the wild game with fences and other safeguards, or to shut off his sheep from the incursions of wild animals, and the field-crops and fruit trees against the ravages of the red deer and the black game.' The town of Nuremberg procured against the margraves an imperial edict to the effect that 'the command to leave the fields open to the game, so that it might feed unhindered on the sweat and blood of the poor man, was contrary both to divine and human justice, and that to scare and drive away the animals from one's own ground was not a crime for which a poor man should be punished in body and goods.' [1]

[1] Landau, 145–146. In 1541 the Provincial Estates had already represented to the government of Ansbach-Bayreuth that 'their burdens were unendurable; in spite of the general height of prices and the great poverty which compelled many to go away, the preserving of game had increased so enormously that the poor peasants could not tend their lands and raise their corn, &c., and were consequently often obliged

Nevertheless the imperial commands remained ineffectual. 'We are surrounded by forests, and are obliged to watch day and night,' the village steward of Linden complained, 'agriculture is completely ruined by the game, our poverty is unspeakable.' The margravian officials of Heilsbronn affirmed the truth of this utterance. 'The quantity of game is incalculable,' it says in a petition of grievances from the peasants of Seligenstadt near Meckendorf in 1582, 'all the fields are devastated by the wild animals, two-thirds of our harvest crops in 1581 were nothing but stubble, the ears had been eaten off by the game. We pray for mercy, that we may not be reduced to begging and going off with our wives and children into misery.'[1] They found no mercy. 'The game injuries,' said the towns of the upper mountain district in 1594, 'proceed chiefly from the huge bears, wolves and wild boars; the stags graze like tame cattle; the peasants are forbidden to erect high fences; everything is going to ruin;' they begged that the prince 'would listen to them for the love of God.'[2] In the previous year the knights of the Franconian Circle had complained on this same score, 'they had had to suffer untold annoyance from the game. Their grounds were turned into wild gardens; the hunting-grounds were extended over the property of the knights. If a nobleman ventured to exercise his rights, he was threatened that he would be shot down like a dog and sent to Ansbach; they were attacked in the open street, and in very truth they had become regular bond-servants.'[3]

to decamp with their wives and children and sell their cattle to save themselves from starvation.' Muck, *Heilsbronn*, i. 402.

[1] Muck, ii. 29, 474. [2] Lang, iii. 275. [3] *Ibid.* 140–141.

How matters stood as regards game in Bavaria is seen from the hunt-books of Dukes William IV. and Albert V. Under William, in the one year 1545, no less than 2032 deer of different sorts were shot. For the years 1555–1579 the entries in Duke Albert's book as trophies of the chase are: 2779 stags, 1784 does, 220 fawns, 100 roes, 150 foxes, 50 hares, 525 wild boars, 2 bears, 23 squirrels; the total amount was 5643 animals which he slew with his own hand in 1852 hunting expeditions. The number of hunt days amounted in some of the years of Albert's reign to 80 and 95; in 1574 to 100, in 1564 to 103.[1]

According to the land ordinance of 1553, the vassals had at any rate the right to protect themselves against the ravages of the game. 'A poor man,' it says therein, 'is at liberty, if the game get into his fields by day or by night and do mischief there, to drive out the animals with his own or his neighbour's dogs.'[2] Duke Albert, however, only allowed fences round the game preserves which had openings at all four corners, through which the animals could pass in and out unhindered.[3] When in 1605 the Bavarian Estates made complaints of intolerable damage done to the poor people by the game they were dismissed with the answer that 'arrangements had been made for the prevention of all damage; but on the other hand the vassals should also be incited to be more diligent in the pursuit of the chase, whereby they would themselves avert the evil.'[4]

[1] 'Jagdregister Herzog Wilhelms IV. vom Jahre 1545, und Auszüge aus dem Jagdbuch Herzog Albrechts V. (1555–1579),' contributed by F. v. Kobell and Föringer in the *Oberbayerisches Archiv. für Vaterländ. Gesch.*, xv. 194–219.

[2] *Landesordnung*, fol. 125ᵃ.

[3] Landau, 157. ** Cf. Sugenheim, *Bayerns Kirchen- und Volkszustände*, 468 ff.

[4] v. Freyberg, i. 'Beilagen,' p. 5.

In Würtemberg the Estates, on their continuous petitioning against the inordinate quantity of game preserved, received from Duke Frederick in 1595 the following assurance: 'In order that our obedient prelates and country people should see that it is our gracious intention to strike at the very root of this grievance, we have resolved that henceforth every year, instead of allowing only three principal forests to be hunted over, there shall henceforth be hunting in four forests (notwithstanding that it may often be arduous and sometimes dangerous) until all the animals have been extirpated. If more forests were hunted over, it would still be of no use, because it would not be possible to hunt them in such a manner as to do away with the grievances complained of.' [1]

The Estates had to be content with this. 'The noble art of the chase as the chief pastime and amusement of princes and other aristocratic personages' not only resulted, for the vassals, in the devastation of their laboriously planted acres, meadows, vineyards and gardens, but also in innumerable hunting services which were amongst the most oppressive of the feudal socages, because there was no limit to them and they were imposed with the utmost arbitrariness. The peasants were obliged to convey all the hunting paraphernalia backwards and forwards from the hunting stables, to lead along the dogs, to help in beating the covers, to take home the game that had been shot, to make palings and hew out roads and paths for the shooters.[2]

[1] Reyscher, ii. 255.

[2] Cf. Landau, 166. ** Concerning the chase socages see also Schwappach, ii. 609 ff.: 'There was no fixed limit to the chase socages, and the utmost caprice in their exaction; they were often imposed with utter

In the duchy of Saxony the parishes complained incessantly of the increasing hunt services that were exacted, and of the numerous calls made on them to cart nets, which was often a very costly business. Thus, for instance, in 1551 the villages in the district of Roda appealed to the territorial prince Duke John Frederick II. on the score that numbers of people were obliged to make long journeys on account of the wolf hunts and, on pain of a fine of 20 florins, leave all their work and follow the hunt; this had actually happened ten times in the winter. Besides this they were often called upon to attend at deer and boar hunts in the middle of the harvest, when they had to leave all their corn and harvesting at a standstill. They were poor people, they had only poor soil where corn and grass would not grow so well as in other places, but only wood, thorn-hedges, dry patches of land and the poorest grass fields; and so they had scarcely enough bread to eat and were obliged with their many little children to go almost naked and to suffer terrible distress. Added to all the heavy burdens of taxes and socages the new services at the wolf hunts had been imposed on them. 'When the bailiff comes in the evening and orders us on pain of a fine to be up early in the morning with our best implements and to go to such or such a place, we are obliged to get up in the middle of the night. Many of us have no trousers or other clothes, neither shoes, caps

unscrupulousness and cruel harshness. For one single hunting expedition over 1000 men were frequently requisitioned, and these men had to spend weeks together in the forest, it might be at a time of necessary farm labour, or in the depths of winter, taking their bullock carts with them, and not receiving a morsel of bread.' 'For the boar-hunts, for which a great many were often wanted, the shepherds and butchers were obliged in many places to give their services' (in Hesse for instance). See Landau, 177.

nor gloves, and no bread in the house; and we start off and go a mile or a mile and a half, and when we get to the spot no one gives us a bit of bread, and we had none to take with us, and we stand about there cold and hungry, so that many of us might fall sick and die if God did not give us special strength. When at last we get back home there is nothing in the house to appease our hunger. The next day we are summoned again, and the way the bells are rung at night is enough to terrify the people. If we were to go on being oppressed in this manner it would not be possible for us to keep ourselves alive, we must either perish with cold or starvation or run away.'

In the district of Eilenburg, in the Saxon Electorate, 96 men were bound to yield hunting service, in the district of Kolditz 643, in the district of Lauterstein 700. At an electoral hunting expedition planned in 1564 the peasants were called on to supply no less than 155 wagons and 1277 men. The vassals of the district of Grünhain offered in return for the remission of their hunting services to supply a yearly quota of 100 men for five weeks for the clearing of the roads in the district of Schwarzenberg and to pay and maintain them at their own expense. Peasants who had formerly been the vassals of convents and abbeys now experienced a severity of oppression unknown to them when they were still under ecclesiastical dominion. 'In the times of the monks,' so the electoral steward Lauterbach recounted in 1562, 'the vassals of the monastery of Altenzelle were not obliged to render any hunting services, for the monks did not hunt game and boars more than once or twice in the year, and they paid their own expenses, and they

[1] Kius, *Fürstwesen*, 193.

kept their own foresters, and used their wagons and those of the convent of Zell for conveying the nets and game, and all the service that was claimed was paid for with money, food and drink. But after the monastery, with the district of Nossen, came to the Elector, the villages of Zell were bound to contribute 44 net- and five game-wagons, and these obligations were multiplied later on.'[1] At a discussion on the grievances of the land at a Provincial Diet at Torgau in 1603 it was stated that, 'as regards the chase and its services, it had been repeatedly complained that the poor vassals, often those who formerly were quite exempted, were summoned to attend in great numbers, in the midst of their own busy work, with carts, horses, cloths and implements, and they also had to draw along game-wagons and lead dogs; and that another 100 persons or more were summoned by the foresters and hunters, for these shooters, hunters, foresters, attendants, who were set up in authority, treat the poor people without the least mercy, and force them into their service. Often for a matter of a few foxes or hares they summon 100 men, keep them several days in rain and snow, with other hardships and without giving them any food, and make them bring up a quantity of carts and horses when the lords and gentry themselves are not taking part in the proceedings.' The peasants were not allowed to fence in the fields against the wild game, and besides this they were obliged to make enclosures for the game and to raise oats for them. In the years 1605 and 1609 fresh complaints were raised by the Estates: 'In spite of all promises of redress, the old game preserves had been enlarged, and fresh ones made; also the people were

[1] Falke, *Kurfürst August*, 154–155.

obliged to leave all the ground bordering on the game preserves bare of crops, for the animals, especially the wild boars, completely devastated the fields, meadows and vineyards; at the frequent hunting expeditions numbers of vassals were obliged to attend for weeks at a time with horses and wagons at their own expense.'[1]

In Hesse, according to a report of the magistrates in 1595, as many as 300 people were called upon to serve at the hare and fox hunts and even to take the place of hounds.[2] All who did not respond to the summons were subjected to severe punishment. In 1591 the Hessian parishes of Allendorf and Verna, because the men did not appear at the right time at a hunt, were fined 80 thalers; in 1593, 28 shepherds from the districts of Battenberg and Frankenberg lost 110 of their best wethers because they had not sent their dogs to the hunt. A master huntsman of the Landgrave Maurice discharged a load of shot into the body of one peasant who had lingered behind in the chase, struck an ear off another who came up late with his hounds, and slashed in two the head of a third; it was not till he cursed the Landgrave that he was brought to trial.[3]

'If it were once to be reckoned up,' wrote a Lutheran preacher in 1587, 'how many hundred thousands of people in Germany are yearly kept back for weeks and even months together from their work, in order to serve the princes' and lords' passion for the chase, it would no longer be asked why the soil was less produc-

[1] *Codex Augusteus*, i. 162 sqq. Frischius, iii. 8. J. Falke, *Steuerbewilligungen*, xxxi. 170, and Falke, 'Verhandl. des Kurfürsten Christian II., mit seinen Landständen, 1601–1609,' in the *Zeitschr. für deutsche Kulturgesch* (Jahrg. 1873), pp. 89–91.

[2] Rommel, *Neuere Gesch.*, ii. 647.

[3] Landau, 169, 177.

tive than of old, and why poverty had become so great and widespread, and was constantly increasing. The principalities and lordships themselves are going to ruin, so immense are the manifold expenses of the hunt, with servants, hounds, falcons, &c. If everything were to be counted up, it might well be said that a stag or any other piece of game, before it is brought to table, has cost 50, 60, or even more, gulden.'

Princes' councillors themselves made calculations of this sort. In Weimar they represented to Duke Frederick William that, counting the expense of all the many hunting servants and their food, a stag might be said to cost 100 florins. In Dresden the price of each pound of game eaten at the Elector's table was reckoned at several gold ducats.[1]

In 1617 the Elector of Saxony had 500 huntsmen in his service, not counting the young ones; the number of his hounds was reckoned at 1000.[2] The keep of every single hound, at the then value of money, came to 12–13 thalers a year.[3]

'Many hundreds of hounds were considered a necessary equipment for a princely court.' Duke Henry Julius of Brunswick appeared at the boar-baiting on the Oberweser, in 1502, with no less than 600 hounds. Landgrave Ludwig IV. of Hesse-Marburg used for his hounds only, in 1582, 158 malters of rye. Landgrave Maurice of Hesse-Cassel, in 1604, calculated the yearly feed of his 116 hounds at 320 quarters of rye and 280

[1] Richard, *Licht und Schatten*, 244.

[2] *Baltische Studien*, ii., Heft ii. 141–142.

[3] Landau, 97. 'What in comparison were the 300 gulden which the Elector spent yearly on the enlargement of the library at Dresden?' *Baltische Studien*, ii., Heft ii. 145.

quarters of oats.[1] The princes' falcons also swallowed up large sums of money. Thus, for instance, Landgrave Maurice had a master of the falcons, with one servant and two boys, who, besides fodder for two horses, were paid 370 gulden a year; his twelve falcons cost 312½ gulden, and consumed yearly 1425 pounds of beef, 230 chickens, and 52 score of eggs.[2]

The princes and lords did not only hunt in the hunting season, but the whole year round.[3]

'The overlords cannot be expected to sit in council all day long,' wrote Bartholomew Ringwalt,

> But that the whole year through,
> They all day long the chase pursue,
> And seldom do in council sit
> Seems unto me by no means fit.

He addressed a 'woe!' to the regents:

> They let no poor down-trodden wight
> Come with murmuring in their sight.
> Also the game in summer-tide
> Injures the poor folk far and wide,
> And with the never-ending chase,
> They 're plagued to death in every place.[4]

'Special complaints from the people were heard in all places on the score that days consecrated to God were given up to the chase.' 'The worst abomination of all,' wrote Spangenberg, 'is that even on Sundays and Saints' days, at the very time of the services, hunting

[1] *Baltische Studien*, ii., Heft ii. 145. ** How considerable the game expenses of Archduke Ferdinand of Tyrol were, is seen from numerous documents of the Innsbruck government archives. For instance, for breeding young pheasants 200 gulden were spent in two years on ants' eggs. The estimate of the cost of a single hunting expedition is 4000 gulden. 100 gulden were spent on one occasion for the transport of falcons from the Austrian provinces of Suabia. Hirn, ii. 495.

[2] Landau, 336-337.

[3] *Ibid.* 115; cf. 128.

[4] *Die lauter Wahrheit*, 231, 236.

and baiting is going on, and one hears the wild beasts scampering and the stinking dogs yelling all through the sermons, and the Sabbaths and feast-days are blasphemously desecrated, for not only do the squires themselves stay away from church, but they draw off their vassals also and whole villages from attendance at God's house.' [1]

In his 'Jagdteufel' he adduced as a special reason for the custom of Sunday-hunting: 'Our great lords drink themselves into a state of ill-health and debility, and as their carousals take place chiefly on Saturday, they shirk divine service in order to recoup their strength by the chase.' [2]

To the 'Jagdteufel,' which, according to the prevalent phraseology of contemporaries, 'stood in company with the "Saufteufel,"' there was further added the 'Wut- und Blutteufel,' 'the truth of which cannot be doubted,' said a preacher, 'when we consider the gruesome punishments and all the inhuman treatment with which the great chiefs and lords proceed against the poor peasants for the slightest infringement of their hunting laws.' 'A bloodthirsty heart,' wrote another preacher, 'proceeds from no cause so much as from constant hunting and game stalking;' 'to start a chase with human beings and to set the dogs at them to tear them to pieces is a most inhuman and barbarous proceeding.' [3]

Duke Maurice of Saxony once gave orders that a poacher should be punished by being bound between the horns of a stag and hunted through a wood with hounds, so that the poor man might be dashed against

[1] *Adelsspiegel*, ii. 393.
[2] *Theatr. Diabol.*, 254.
[3] *Hoffpredigten*, Bl. N.

the trees and thickets and torn to pieces.[1] Another overlord 'caused a vassal who had killed a wild boar to be hunted in the Rhine on a cold winter's night, and obliged him to stay in the river so long that he was quite frozen.'[2] The Englishman John Taylor says in his account of his travels in Westphalia in 1616: 'In some places there it is as dangerous to steal or to kill a hare as it is in England to rob a church or to murder a human being; and yet it only costs two English pennies to put the miscreant to death, for the best and the worst is only a bit of cord.'[3] 'Such a perverted spirit has come over the world,' says Spangenberg, 'that anyone is more likely to obtain mercy from an overlord for having killed two or three peasants, than for shooting one stag or deer.'[4] The superintendent George Nigrinus also wrote: 'It would fare better with a man for killing a peasant, than for shooting a wild duck.'[5] On the whole the hunting laws of the great grandees may be said to have been 'written in blood.'

[1] Richard, 246. ** The story of an Archbishop of Salzburg who punished a man for killing a stag by having him sewn up in the stag's skin and thrown to the dogs in the market place (Kirchhof, *Wendunmuth*, i. 485) is a legend got up by the Protestants; see Hauthaler, 'Eine Geschichtslüge über den Erzbischof Michael von Salzburg' (1554–1560), in the *Salzburg. kathol. Kirchenzeitung* (1895), No. 11.

[2] Beck, 234; he refers among others to Doepler, *Theatr. poen. et execut. crimin.*, cap. 44.

[3] *Zeitschrift für Hamburger Gesch.*, vii. 473. ** In the Nuremberg annals may be read the short and horrible entry: 'A.D. 1614, June 30, Stephen Täubner, a peasant of Schoppershof near Nuremberg, had his ten fingers chopped off on the *Fleischbrücke* in this town, and was banished in perpetuity from the town, because he had carried off a great quantity of the Margrave's game. At last he fell into the hands of the Margrave (of Ansbach), who had him hanged.' See Newald in the *Blätter des Vereins für Landeskunde von Niederösterreich*, new series, xiv. (1880), p. 216.

[4] Landau, 147.

[5] Nigrinus, *Daniel*, 68.

The Elector Augustus of Saxony in 1572 issued the following ordinance: 'Whoever does any damage or is guilty of poaching in the princes' game preserves, forests, woods, &c., shall be driven with scourging out of our land into perpetual banishment, or else shall be condemned to the galleys for six years with perpetual labour in mines and such like; should these punishments not suffice to prevent the damaging of game, the Elector will ordain severer ones.'[1] Seven years later there followed the order: 'Everyone guilty of doing injury to game, and caught in the act, shall be instantly shot dead without mercy.'[2]

In 1584 hanging became the fixed punishment for simple game stealing, and the same punishment was inflicted on all who aided and abetted a poacher.[3]

Later Electors renewed these enactments; Christian I. added the further command that, 'All dogs taken by the peasants into the fields, must, in order to prevent their damaging the game, have one of their forefeet cut off.' An electoral edict of 1618 decreed that, 'Every owner of a dog which has caused injury to game shall be punished with imprisonment

[1] Frischius, iii. 14. [2] *Codex Augusteus*, ii. 524.

[3] *Ibid.* 526–529. Stisser, 493. Falke, *Kurfürst August*, 149. Richard, 246. Capital punishment for poaching on game preserves was first established in Saxony by a mandate of the Elector Maurice in 1543. See Distel, *Zur Todesstrafe gegen Wilderer in Kursachsen. Neues aus der Gesetzgebung und Spruchpraxis vor dem Mandate vom* 10 *Okt.* 1584. *Eine Archivstudie* (*Sep=Abdr. aus der Zeitschr. für die ges. Strafrechtswissenschaft*), Berlin, 1893. The usual punishments (according to Schwappach, ii. 644 ff.) for the lighter game offences consisted in lengthy prison or labour sentences, which were often intensified by condemning the culprits to wear the so-called poacher's cap, i.e. the horns of a stag fastened on an iron hoop; further, by various bodily penalties, putting out eyes, chopping off hands, whipping, or *tratto di corda*, &c.

or compulsory labour at the Dresden fortification works.' [1]

Elector Joachim II. of Brandenburg decreed in a hunting ordinance that, 'Whoever caught a fawn, a young roe, or a wild sow in the forests should have both his eyes put out; whoever shot one of the prince's hares would have a hare branded on his cheek.' [2] In 1574 Elector John George intensified the punishment. 'Whoever shoots game, also wild ducks, and other feathered game,' he decreed, 'has incurred in our lands the penalty of the gallows; and the same punishment shall befall those who shall have aided and abetted the poachers or given them any help and countenance.' [3] As irremittable fines to be imposed for poaching offences Elector John Sigismund decreed in 1610: for shooting a hart, 500 thalers; for shooting a doe, 400 thalers; for a wild calf, 200 thalers; for a roe, 100 thalers; for a hare, 50 thalers; this last sum was also to be paid by anyone who shot a mountain-cock, a blackcock, a bezel-hen, or a partridge. For a wild goose or a crane the fine was 40 thalers; for a wild duck, 10 thalers; for a wild pigeon, 5 thalers.[4]

Duke Henry Julius of Brunswick (1598) also decreed capital punishment for poaching.[5]

[1] Beck, 718. Richard, 246. The nobles who transgressed against the hunting laws of the Electors were obliged to pay heavy fines; thus, for instance, the son of Hans von Wildebach (about 1604) had to pay 500 thalers for having baited a hare (which he never caught) in the electoral hunting-grounds. *Zeitschr. für deutsche Kulturgesch.* (Jahrg. 1872), p. 496.

[2] See our remarks, vol. vi. p. 65. Fidicin, v. 291.

[3] Mylius, ii. Abt. iii. 4–5. [4] *Ibid.* vi. Abt. i. 207; cf. iv. Abt. i. 523.

[5] Stisser, 492. ** 'Poachers and receivers of stolen goods,' it says in a code of instructions of Maximilian II. of February 1, 1575, for his 'chief-country-master of the hunt,' in Austria below the Enns, 'of a year's standing, shall be punished with a fine, or in some other way. If they commit a second offence they shall be hung.' Newald in the *Blätter für Landeskunde. Niederösterreichs*, new series, xiv. (1880), 215. See also

The least severe punishment which Landgrave Philip of Hesse inflicted for poaching was gibbeting. On the cross-beam of a gallows-tree was fixed a roller through which ran a rope, and to this rope the culprit, with his hands bound behind him, was fastened. He was then drawn up to the top and suddenly let down again, but only so far that he remained dangling in the air and never touched the ground. This punishment was all the more cruel because the unhappy victim only hung by his arms, which were thus forced backwards in an unnatural way till they were bent over his head.[1] Severe punishments were also inflicted on people who frightened the game away from their own fields.[2] Landgrave William IV. of Hesse ordained on July 27, 1567, that 'any person discovered in the act of poaching should be trapped like a wild boar and led straight to the gallows, which stands on the top of the high barbican, and be hung there, so that no disputation may occur as to his destination as before.'[3] A poacher from Gottesbüren had his right eye put out and a stag-horn branded on his forehead; another one was first stretched on the rack and then hanged.[4] Not less severe than that for poaching was the punishment for fishing in the manorial ponds. When the Hessian official at Eppstein in 1575 sentenced nine crayfish-stealers to punishment in body and life and had them put to the rack, he asked the Landgrave Ludwig at Marburg if the sentence (whether the halter or putting their eyes out) was to be carried out at once. Ludwig's councillors, after examining into the matter, came to the

'Kaiser Maximilians II. Jagdordnung von 1575,' by Dr. B. Dudik in the *Archiv. für österreich. Gesch.*, 38, 341.

[1] Landau, 184. [2] *Ibid.* 138 ff. [3] *Ibid.* 188–189. [4] *Ibid.* 188, 192.

conclusion that the malefactors might be spared this penalty for the present: scourging and banishment would be enough; the Landgrave, however, ordered the immediate execution of the sentence.[1]

Margrave George Frederick of Ansbach-Bayreuth attached capital punishment also to every offence connected with small game, and, not satisfied with putting to death all poachers and destroyers of game, in 1589 he decreed the same punishment for every subject who knew of such offences and did not give information to the magistrates.[2]

In the margraviate 'the breeding of game and the insolence of the gamekeepers to the peasants are intolerable; the peasants are seized, shut up and tortured with tyrannical cruelty.'[3]

[1] Landau, *Fischerei*, 67. It was customary, in order to frighten off thieves, to erect gallows-trees by the lakes and ponds (p. 68). What a large number of these gallows there must have been may be judged by the extensive area occupied by the manorial ponds. In Lower Hesse, for instance, under Landgrave William IV., the princely ponds covered an area of 881 acres, not including 28 breeding ponds. In Upper Hesse, in 1570, there were 30 manorial ponds, and 13 breeding ponds besides. Landgrave Louis V., in 1597, set up a new pond which covered 1000 acres, and in 1609 yet another which covered 600 acres and cost over 20,000 gulden (pp. 16–17).

[2] Muck, i. 615. ** Cf. also the mandate of Maximilian I. of Bavaria, of August 17, 1598, in v. Freyberg, ii. 23.

[3] Muck, i. 618. ** In contrast with the game laws of other princes, those of Archduke Charles were distinguished by mildness. Cf. Hurter, ii. 354–355; Peinlich, *Zur Gesch. der Leibeigenschaft*, 79 ff. All the same, however, the caprice and the plaguing of the forest-masters and forest-servants became insupportable. Hurter, 355 ff. In the Tyrol the princes' masters of the hunt would only tolerate such very low fences that the game could easily get over them. See Hirn, ii. 488 ff., where there are fuller details concerning the cruel hunting laws of Archduke Ferdinand II., a fanatical hunter. Some of the details given here seem almost incredible, but they are confirmed by documentary acts. Thus, for instance, a man from Burgau, who had defended himself against the attacks of a hound, was punished with fining and imprisonment.

In no country were such numerous hunting laws made as in Würtemberg. Duke Ulrich, before his banishment in 1517, had already issued the order that, 'Whosoever was found in the princely forests with muskets, cross-bows, or any other weapons, or in the fields in places set apart for the small game, whether he were shooting or not, should have both his eyes put out.'[1] After his reinstatement he reissued the decree that 'all poachers should be severely punished in body, life, honour, or goods: he himself would like to see both their eyes put out also.'[2] In 1551 Duke Christopher gave orders that 'within four weeks all vassals should give up their muskets; whoever kept back a musket in his house, or was met in the fields, or forests, or in the open country with a musket, or a firelock, or other hand-gun, on foot or on horse, with or without ammunition, should be subject to heavy disgrace and punishment.' When, however, 'the accursed riffraff' of poachers refused to be intimidated, it was decreed in 1554 that 'whoever harboured or sheltered a poacher, or even abstained from giving information to the magistrates, should be punished with equal severity; if a convicted poacher would not confess in court what he had shot, and who his associates were, he was to be sentenced to the rack.'[3]

Nevertheless these, like all later enactments, owing

[1] Reyscher, iv. 49.

[2] *Strafbefehle aus den Jahren*, 1534, 1535, 1541, 1543. Reyscher, iv. 70, 71, 77–78.

[3] Reyscher, 16ª, 284 ff. On January 8, 1610, John Frederick issued a general rescript to the effect that, 'All the feathered game that is caught shall go nowhere else than to our court household and to our kitchen-master in return for suitable payment: for a wild duck, 12 kreuzer; for a hazel hen, 8 kreuzer; for a field hen, 6 kreuzer; for a snipe, 5 kreuzer; for a quail, 2 kreuzer.' Reyscher, 16ᵇ, 227.

especially to the growing distress among the people, only led to greater and greater disaffection. In Würtemberg, as everywhere else, 'the starving poor, who saw the wild game in such quantities around them, and saw them cherished and preserved, while they themselves with their families had to starve and were fleeced and sweated in a heartrending manner, naturally wanted now and then to eat their fill and have their roast, and so there came about all sorts of offences and penal refractoriness, whereby the great people were themselves punished.' 'Disguised with beards, masks, and even in female attire,' the poachers occasionally trooped in bands through the woods; they threw down poisoned balls which rendered the animals senseless, so that, as it says in an edict of the territorial government, 'those of the court retinue and others who eat the poisoned animals also become senseless.' Not only were the forest servants treated so badly that they no longer dared attend to their duties, but the dukes themselves were frequently in peril of their lives. Duke Ludwig, in 1588, no longer dared 'pursue the pleasures of the chase.' [1]

[1] Reyscher, ii. 134–136, and iv. 81–82, 166–168. Frischius, iii. 164–168, 173. Sattlêr, v. 109. ** The Elector of Mayence complained in a letter to the Landgrave Maurice, on November 3, 1617, that the poachers sometimes went through his game preserves in bands of as many as sixty. Landau, 193.

# PART II

## CHAPTER I

### PRINCES AND COURT LIFE

In the course of the sixteenth century the court life of the Princes became more and more brilliant and magnificent. 'With almost every death of a prince,' wrote a preacher in 1553, 'the number of pages and servants, of secretaries and kitchen-masters, increases, and not only at the great courts but also at the small ones, which think it necessary to imitate the great ones.'

At the little court of the Margrave Hans von Küstrin the retinue consisted of 284 persons, who all received salaries.[1] John George of Saxony, administrator of the former bishopric of Merseburg, fed every day 114 persons, not reckoning the servants of his court, people for whose keep he was also in part responsible. For kitchen, cellar and chandry he spent weekly over 1000 florins.[2] To Duke John Frederick II. of Saxe-Weimar, whose territory only covered 77 square miles, his councillors wrote in 1561: 'Your Princely Highness as a rule provides food daily for 400 persons at 50 tables; for kitchen and cellar provisions alone (as the kitchen and cellar registers show) these people cost

[1] *Märkische Forschungen*, xiii. 446. [2] Müller, *Forschungen*, i. 11–17.

at least 900 florins a week, which, not reckoning banquets and etceteras, comes to a yearly sum of 46,800 florins.' For making their clothes 'every prince and every princess kept at court five master- and four constantly employed working-tailors, and so many occasional helps besides, that the whole number was seldom under thirty, and they occupied three tables in the dining-hall.'[1] The councillors of Duke Frederick William of Saxe-Weimar drew his attention in 1590 to the fact that the yearly sum which came from the ducal domains was not much over 30,000 gulden, whereas he required for the maintenance of his court over 83,000 gulden a year; also that all the corn from the domains was used for the servants and court retinue.[2] From Trinity 1557 to Trinity 1558 the maintenance of his court cost the Elector 100,000 gulden.[3] At the court of Duke Wolfgang of Pfalz-Zweibrücken, according to a bill of provisions of 1559 in our possession, 2296 persons were fed in one week.[4] Landgrave William IV. wrote on March 14, 1575, with regard to himself and his brothers, to his brother Philip of Hesse-Rheinfels: 'Although the landgraviate, since the death of your father Philip, has been divided into five parts, each one keeps court on a grand scale with a large retinue of noblemen and commoners. Our family is also noted for filling its courts with pompous grandees with their golden chains together with their wives and children. To these people nothing must be denied, kitchen and cellar must

[1] Kius, *Ernestinische Finanzen*, 98–99.

[2] Moser, *Patriotisches Archiv.*, iii. 275 ff.

[3] ** See Kurt Treusch von Buttlar, 'Das tägliche Leben an den deutschen Fürstenhöfen des sechzehnten Jahrhunderts,' in the *Zeitschr. für Kulturgesch.*, 1897, p. 7.

[4] *Zeitschr. für die Geschichte des Oberrheins*, x. 289.

stand open to them, and servants' wages are thus also greatly increased. They think this gives them great importance, for they leave us with unwiped mouths and without thanks, laughing at our silliness. We do not stop here, however, but we dress our ladies-in-waiting, our pages, also the squires themselves, all in velvet and silk, deck out our horses with feathers and velvet trappings, just every bit as though we were civet-cats and were very ill at ease in and among the fashions of our own country.' 'Verily, this will turn out badly in the end and have evil consequences, especially if a rough time should come and we should have to go to war. For, indeed, Italian and German state do not accord together; for the Italians, even if they do wear fine clothes, eat all the more plainly and sparely, and are content with a meal of salad and eggs, while we Germans must stuff our mouths and our bellies full; therefore it is impossible to mix together German and Italian pomp. The princes, counts and nobles who attempt this, only spoil both and reduce themselves withal to suffering and want.' 'In this respect we observe no limits, but in addition to the many nobles and stately ladies-in-waiting at our courts, we saddle ourselves with such numbers of sworn doctors and chancellery writers, that there is scarcely one of us who has not in his chancellery as many, if not more, doctors, secretaries and writers, receiving higher pay, moreover, than our august father himself, who possessed the whole land.' 'Furthermore, each one of us keeps so many hunters, cooks, and other servants, so that there is a special huntsman for almost every mountain, for every stomach a special cook, and for every barrel a special tapster, which verily does not lead to good in the end. We will keep silence respecting

the huge buildings in which we feel strangely lost, likewise the gambling and the going about to dances and to visit foreign princes, both which amusements quickly empty our purses. For although in some places we are quits, yet often our expenses are as great as if we stayed at home, since we all, except Landgrave George, arrange things in such a way that shoals of servants are left behind in our houses when we go away, and so our absence makes scarcely any difference.' 'It would also be well,' William adds in a postscript, 'to say a good deal about the numerous gratuities and the high wages which many servants demand of us, as if we were kings and emperors.'[1] At the Würtemberg court, in the dining-hall of the lower ducal officials and court retainers 450 persons were fed every day; in the knights' hall the prince's table and the marshal's table were generally occupied by 166 higher officials and court servants.[2] Duke William V. of Bavaria, in 1588, fed daily no less than 771 persons, besides 44 persons who belonged to the court retinue of the duchess.[3] The electors in their court state and retinues wanted to ape kings. The court establishment of the Elector Frederick IV. counted 678 persons.[4] When the Brandenburg Provincial Estates represented to Elector Joachim II. that in view of the general distress in the land and the terrible amount of the princes' debts, it was desirable that he should discharge his superfluous court officials, he replied that 'he could not reduce his establishment without impairing the dignity of his electoral estate,

[1] Moser, *Patriotisches Archiv.*, iv. 165–172.
[2] See our remarks, vol. xi. 132 f.
[3] V. Freyberg, *Landstände*, ii. 451–454.
[4] See our remarks, vol. ix. p. 216.

for an Elector was as high as a King in the empire.'[1] The Elector Christian I. of Saxony, whenever he went out, was accompanied by fifty young noblemen on horseback, called carabineers, with a glittering staff at their head; and beside these there walked 100 picked and stalwart men who were called Trabantes.[2] Philip Hainhofer of Augsburg saw, in 1617, in the electoral stables at Dresden, 176 riding horses, 84 coach horses, and 30 mules.[3] Many of the princes kept from 400 to 500 horses in their stables.[4] As regards the 'superfluity of writer-folk at the courts,' which was a matter of universal complaint, it may be mentioned that at the death of Duke Louis of Würtemberg († 1593) the number of chancellery clerks, besides the government privy councillors and the court registrars, amounted to ninety-four; in the Upper Council there were twelve councillors, six advocates, five secretaries, and twelve writers.[5]

[1] Winter, *Märkische Stände*, xx. 649–650.

[2] Richard, *Licht und Schatten.*

[3] *Baltische Studien*, ii., Heft ii. 129. [4] *Theatr. Diabol.*, 410.

[5] Sattler, v. Beil. ss. 90–93. From Duke Gotthard von Kurland's *Hofordnung, letztes Drittel des* 16*ten Jahrhunderts:*

His 'Personel' 113 persons and 77 horses;
Her 'Personel' 163 persons and 141 horses.

Total 276 persons and 218 horses.

16 tables occupied by the Court retinue—
In money the cost of clothes for the personal staff amounted.
for the women to 1622 thalers;
for the men to 1478 thalers.

Total 3100 thalers.

*Monumenta Livoniae Antiquae*, ii.: *Historische Nachricht vom Schloss zu Mitau*, p. 13 ff. There is a very interesting calculation of the table requisites in the same place, 21–23; wages of court servants, 22–24. The

### 1. 'Drinking Princes' and Court Festivities

With but few exceptions all contemporaries, whether prejudiced or unprejudiced, in public pamphlets, in sermons, or in private letters, in their reports concerning court life, speak in a way which cannot but produce an appalling impression on readers and hearers. 'All the vices of the time,' say they with one accord, 'were united at the courts as at their fountain-head, and thence distributed through the land among all classes. But amongst these vices, drunkenness, the "Saufteufel" which commandeered so many other devils, ruled supreme.'

'What numbers there are among the princes and lords,' wrote the Brunswick councillor George Engelhart Löhneiss, 'who are not only themselves addicted to superfluous drinking but who also bestow large gifts and honours on wine-bibbers! Some of them drink to such an extent that they remain lying on the ground;

yearly court consumption of food was 200 oxen, 130 fatted pigs; 2000 sheep, 500 lambs, 100 calves from Christmas to Easter; 1500 geese, 4000 chickens, 25,000 eggs, 150 sucking pigs, 'game, as much as was to be obtained,' and so forth; 80 awms of Rhenish wine, 30 barrels of French wine, &c.; 1193 thalers for sweetmeats. The chancellery used 30 reams of paper. ** See the article in the *Zeitschr. für Kulturgesch.*, 1897, p. 7 ff., quoted above, p. 224, n. 3. From the year's account of the Margrave Hans von Küstrin (1560) for the purchase of meat it appears that at least 1½ lb. per head was consumed; this according to our notions seems preposterous. But this was by no means all, for the account in question does not include game, which it was not necessary to buy. It is needful to remember that in those days game played an incomparably larger part in menus than nowadays, especially, of course, in the princes' courts (*l.c.* 23). Concerning the immense increase of officialdom in Pomerania resulting from the great augmentation of incomes through Church robbery, and for the brilliant organisation of courts since the Reformation, see Spahn, *Verfassungs- und Wirtschaftsgesch. des Herzogtums Pommern*, p. 64 ff.; for the great abuses in this officialdom, see p. 78 ff.

others die in a few days; others drink themselves to a state of idiotcy; and so forth.'[1] John Chryseus in 1545, in his 'Hofteufel' dedicated to the Dukes John Frederick and John William of Saxony, describes the proceedings at court as follows:

They eat, they drink at such a rate,
That, faith, it is a glory great
When one can drink more than a cow,
Then vomit, and drink again I vow.
It is the custom, it 's quite fit,
None are unused to it one bit,
So they go on with banqueting,
With eating, drinking, jubilating,
Great wickedness thereby comes in,
But no one now esteems it sin.[2]

Nicodemus Frischlin says of the inordinate drinking at courts:

Yea, yea, with beakers now at court they raise
Drink offerings to their princes' weal and ways;
This is their worshipping, their prayer and praise,

and thus they bring on themselves all sorts of illness, gout, dropsy, colic, and fever.[3] 'At some of the Princes' and lords' courts things are so arranged that many a man earns more and fares better who is a monster of intemperance, than others who drudge on steadily at their toilsome labours.'[4] 'To the shame and disgrace of the holy Evangel,' says a Protestant pamphlet of 1579, 'the vice of inordinate drinking reigns so powerfully at those courts which call themselves

[1] Löhneiss, 142.
[2] Chryseus, *Hofteufel*, Act 2, Scene 4.
[3] Strauss, *Frischlin*, 108.
[4] Strigenicius, *Diluvium*, 90; cf. Gr. Wickgram, *Die Biecher Vincentii Obsopei*: *Von der kunst zu trinken* (Freiburg i. Br., 1537), Bl. E. Olorinus Variscus, *Ethnogr. mundi*, Bl. G 4[b].

evangelical, that a tolerably sober after generation will scarcely credit what the history of our times has to say on the subject. Were we to count up the names of all those of princely, or otherwise high birth, who have drunk themselves to death, we should have a fine long list indeed.' 'How can I keep sober?' say the great princely lords and their retinue; 'are not all the rest of my blood pious topers and drinkers? It would be eccentric and wanting in manly German strength and honour, if I took to being different from them.' [1]

There were, nevertheless, honourable exceptions. Duke John Albert I. of Mecklenburg was an enemy of all excessive drink.[2] So, too, was Duke Julius of Brunswick. In 1579 the latter issued the stringent order that, 'The tutors, marshals, valets, preceptors and collaborators in attendance on our young noblemen and lords must with all diligence and faithfulness see to it that our sons (and especially the Duke Henry Julius, postulate Bishop of Halberstadt) shall not only not be allowed to indulge in immoderate drinking, in gluttony and other irregular and wild modes of life, but also, in their highnesses' presence, there shall be no

[1] *Vom newen Saufteufel unglaich ärger denn der alte* (1579), pp. 5–6. ** See v. Buttlar in the *Zeitschr. für Kulturgesch.*, 1897, pp. 25 ff., 30. The author remarks (p. 33): 'There was no more need to fast, no more need to confess. For untrammelled children of nature like these country-born nobles of the sixteenth century, it meant a great deal that such restraints should fall away. The "Fressen und Saufen," which, according to Seckendorff's *Teutscher Fürstenstaat*, was a disgrace to the courts, came into vogue; it became the rule, the custom, as appears only too plainly from the court ordinances; and it crushed out with the force of all that was vulgar and low any noble instincts that still remained in a despairing consciousness of duty.'

[2] Schirrmacher, i. 766. How matters stood, however, with his brother Duke Christopher, is shown by Schirrmacher, i. 284, n. 2.

carousing or other rowdiness, or rough and wild behaviour with words, gestures or deeds, so that the young men may not be incited and led on to irregularities.' 'If on the visits of foreign princes and nobles it is thought necessary, according to the vicious habit which, alas, has become too prevalent among the Germans, to have a drinking-bout the sons must be led away from the table as soon as the drinking begins.' The Duke Henry Julius was henceforth to be forbidden to take part in copious drinking, as also in other dissipation and wantonness.[1] Of Prince Christian of Anhalt it was also said by Catholic contemporaries that he was 'usually sober in his habits' and abstained from 'immoderate drinking' and would 'not allow it to go on in his vicinity,' in this respect 'being a somewhat rare bird, seeing that the opposite was always flagrantly the case at all princely convivialities.'[2]

Among the Catholic princes, Duke William of Cleves[3] and the Bavarian Dukes William V. and Maximilian I. were distinguished for their sobriety. Philip Hainhofer, who took part at Munich in 1613 in the wedding festivities of the Count Palatine Wolfgang William of Neuburg with the Bavarian Princess Magdalena, said in his account of his travels: 'All through these eight days I have not seen one man intoxicated or the worse for drink, which is indeed admirable. There was also no more "toasting" at meals beyond drinking the bridegroom's health and that of the bride and of the House of Bavaria.'[4] At the courts, also, of the Austrian

[1] V. Strombeck, *Deutscher Fürstenspiegel*, 20. See Bodemann, *Herzog Julius*, 226–227.

[2] See *Allgemeine deutsche Biographie*, iv. 145 ff.

[3] *Zeitschr. des bergischen Geschichtsvereins*, ix. 173.

[4] Hainhofer, 238.

Dukes Charles and Ferdinand 'the vice of drunkenness was unknown.'[1] On the other hand Archduke Ernest, the eldest brother of Rudolf II., was initiated into the habit of drinking in 1575. At Dresden in this year he brought on himself, by excessive wine-drinking, 'a German fever which, as usual, lasted about twenty-four hours or more and then quite left him.' By his Imperial Majesty's command he was obliged while there to respond to all the toasts drunk to him.[2]

At the Saxon courts 'constant toping was an old-established evil custom.' For a mere 'welcome' it was necessary to drink at least fourteen beakers. At times there was as much as 26,000 firkins of wine in the electoral cellar.[3] The Electors themselves were renowned and notorious as the 'first and most famous drinkers.' When the Elector John Frederick in 1545, with his cousin Duke Maurice, held his last 'friendly gatherings' at Torgau, at Schweinitz and on the Schellenberg near Chemnitz, 'great and inordinate drinking' went on everywhere. At the 'drinking wagers' to which the Elector invited his friends, several men,

[1] Concerning Karl von Steiermark (Styria) it is said: 'Vini, quod his temporibus non immerito laudes, contentissimus fuit.' See Hurter, ii. 318.

[2] V. Bezold, *Rudolf II.*, p. 8, n. 2.

[3] *Baltische Studien*, ii., Heft ii. 131, 137. 'The hearty welcome' which had to be drunk on the occasion of grand visits and festivities was a bumper of four or eight, in many places actually fifteen or sixteen measures. Vulpius, vii. 52. ** Unlimited drinking at the Saxon court had become such a matter of course that many of the Princes would no longer accept an invitation to Dresden or Torgau because, as the Duke of Brandenburg said in making his excuses, 'they were made so drunk each time that they fell full length on the floor,' or as Joachim Ernest of Anhalt said to a relation, 'they went there like men and came away like hogs.' Ebeling F. Taubmann, 83.

amongst them Ernest of Schönberg, 'drank themselves to death.' Count George of Mansfeld came near to death; Duke Maurice, although till then he had been second to none as a drinker, was beaten by John Frederick and had to be taken to Dresden in a litter, in a very serious condition; his life was despaired of for a long time.[1] At a convivial gathering at the Diet of Princes at Naumburg in 1561, the Rhinegrave Philip Franz drank himself to death with malmsey.[2] Drink was also the ruin of Elector Christian I., who, at the court of his father Augustus at Dresden, 'from youth up was accustomed to inordinate intemperance.'[3] As Electoral Prince he wrote in June 1584 to Christian I. of Anhalt-Bernburg: 'von Bünau has told me that your Excellency is no longer a patron of drink, for which I am heartily sorry; I wish your Excellency much prosperous and happy time and well-being from God, and that you may be brought out of such errors back into the right faith.' The wished-for conversion quickly followed, for only four weeks later Christian was thanking the prince for having helped von Bünau to arrange such 'famous drinking-bouts,' and declaring on his part that 'it would not be his fault if in course of time he did not again become his equal.' Letters about 'good honest drinking-bouts and frequent carousals to the honour of God and in order to keep his boon

[1] Richard, *Licht und Schatten*, 72–73.

[2] Groen van Prinsterer, i. 48–52. Cf. Heppe, *Gesch. des Protestantismus*, i. 405, note.

[3] For an evening drinking-bout at Weida held in honour of the foreign grandees who were on a visit to him, the Elector Augustus ordered 50 firkins of wine; each firkin contained 72 tankards. V. Weber, *Kurfürstin Anna*, 226.

companion up to the mark, were "nuts" to him.' 'The reason why this letter is so stupid and badly written,' so he excused himself once to Prince Hans George of Anhalt, 'is that I have not yet altogether got over that last splendid orgy, and my hands tremble so that I can scarcely hold my pen.'[1] The Count Palatine John Casimir, who as a fourteen-year-old boy had already to be exhorted not to drink away reason and understanding,[2] told the Elector Christian of Saxony in 1590 of a visit which he had paid the Margrave George Frederick of Brandenburg at the Plassenburg: 'I spent a whole day at the Plassenburg lying in bed; I had drunk the great welcoming; after that I danced, and then drank again, while the host was obliged to go to sleep; then I danced again and won a pretty pearl wreath; after this the host came back from his sleep, and had a fat Indian cock brought in, to which I was invited, with other jovial fellows, and we prepared our host for another sleeping-bout.'[3]

There were numbers of 'brave drinkers' who, like Veit von Bassenheim, were able to empty three times running, at one draught, a silver beaker containing eight bottles of wine.[4]

'A very monster of almost daily drunkenness and debauchery' was the Elector Christian II. of Saxony. When in July 1607 he was sojourning at the imperial court at Prague he made himself a public spectacle by his insobriety, and he himself boasted that 'he had scarcely spent a sober hour while at Prague.'[5] By

[1] V. Weber, *Kurfürstin Anna*, 232. [2] Kluckhohn, *Briefe* I, li.

[3] V. Weber, *Kurfürstin Anna*, 233–234. [4] Vulpius, iii. 359.

[5] The Bavarian agent William Boden wrote on July 15, 1607, from Prague to Maximilian I., that Christian had indulged the whole time in *gula*

many of his theologians he was called 'the pious heart'; but he never opened his lips except to utter filthy and obscene talk. The finely cultured Belgian, Daniel Eremita, who visited the German courts in 1609 in company with a Florentine ambassador, drew an appalling picture of the debauched, drunken life and doings at the Saxon court. In the Elector's ungainly, misshapen figure, puffed and swollen by excesses of every kind, and in his red, sensual face the Belgian saw more of a beast than of a prince. Seven hours long they sat at the table at which there was no other entertainment than eating and drinking: the besotted Elector only now and then made an indecent remark or proposed the health of some prince, diverted himself with shaking the remains of the beaker into the faces of the servants, and boxing the ears of the court fool.[1] In 1611 the Wild and Rheingraf at Salm signified to the Elector that, 'Whereas the ladies of the court always sit at table, it is fitting that they should take part in the drinking as well as the others; the Duchess of Brunswick, when she is intoxicated, is beyond measure idiotic and merry.'[2] The

*et crapula:* 'De ipsius obscoenis verbis vix ausim scribere.' The Venetian ambassador Soranzo wrote similarly about the Elector: 'l'eccesso suo nel bere è cosa da non credere.' Wolf, *Maximilian*, iii. 25, n. 2. Stieve, ii. 898, n. 1.

[1] '. . . Immanis bellua, voce, auribus, omni corporis gestu convenienti destituta: nutu tantum et concrepitis digitorum articulis loquitur; nec inter familiares quidem nisi obscoena quaedam et fere per convitium iactat. In vultu eius nihil placidum, rubor et maculae e vino contractae oris lineamenta confuderant. . . . Septem quibus accumbebatur horis, nihil aliud quam ingentibus vasis et immensis poculis certabatur, in quorum haustu palmam procul dubio ipse dux ferebat. . . .' In Le Bret, *Magazin*, ii. 337–339.

[2] v. Weber's *Archiv. für sächsische Gesch.*, vii. 233. Cf. Schweinichen, iii. 222.

drinking of the high-born German ladies was not less notorious abroad than that of the princes.[1]

In a funeral sermon preached over the Elector Christian II. († 1611), the Saxon court-preacher Michael Niederstetter lamented the deceased prince as a 'father of the fatherland.' 'The extent of the calamity could not be exaggerated,' he said, 'nor the greatness of the loss estimated.' He compared the Elector with Moses, but he specially emphasised the fact that the latter had lived 120 years, and the former only twenty-seven years and nine months. In the time of Moses people did not then shorten their lives and bring on untimely death by excessive drinking. 'The servants of great lords and those who surround princes, should not tempt and lead them on to drink and debauchery, nor encourage them to drain great goblets to the health of other lords and princes.'[2]

Still more emphatic was a speech by Helwig Garth, superintendent in Freiberg: 'His electoral Grace, as is known to all and cannot be denied, had a certain inclination to strong and excessive drink, which caused him to be much cried down now and again in the Roman Empire, and above all by the enemies of the holy Evangel: for he was compelled to be their reeling, rolling Nabal, their boon-companion and champion-drinker.'[3]

Concerning the Elector John George, successor to Christian II., the French ambassador Grammont wrote:

[1] Henry IV. of France said it had been suggested to him to marry a German wife, 'mais les femmes de cette région ne me reviennent nullement, et penserois, si j'en avais espousé une, de devoir avoir tousjours un lot de vin couché auprès de moy.' *Oeconomies royales*, iii. 171.

[2] *Drei christliche Predigten, &c. Erste Predigt.*, Bl. B 3, D 4.

[3] Quoted by Köhler, *Lebensbeschreibungen*, ii. 113 note. Cf. Senkenberg, 24, xi.

'His sole occupation was drinking immoderately every day; only on the days when he went to the Holy Communion did he keep sober in the morning at any rate; to make up for this, however, he drank all through the night till he fell under the table.'[1] The gross coarseness that went on at these orgies is shown by a letter from the Elector to the Landgrave Louis of Hesse in 1617: 'Your Grace is not ignorant of the indiscretion of which on your departure, and the evening before, the servant George Truchsess was guilty at your court, in that he not only spoke against our dear and gracious cousin and foster-son, Duke Frederick of Saxony, in disgraceful threatening language, saying that he should throw the candle at your Grace, but also the next morning, in the presence of your Grace, struck our Truchsess Ulrich von Günderode a blow in the face.'[2] 'Folly and drink,' said the mighty toper Wolfgang von Anhalt, 'with good honest blows are spice to the banquet, and still better is it if blood is seen also, for this gives occasion for another bumper to drink down the quarrel; what would life be without plenty of drinking. It was not for nothing that God gave us princes our rich vineyards.'[3]

'Suchlike jovial princely life with good honest drinking, &c.,' stands out plainly in the diary of Duke Adolf Frederick of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, beginning with the year 1611. Of the years 1613–1618, for instance,

[1] Tholuck, *Das kirchliche Leben*, i. 214.

[2] *Thüringisches Provinzialblatt*, 1839, No. 84. Cf. Tholuck, *Das kirchliche Leben*, i. 228–229.

[3] *Wohlbedächtige Reden von etlichen Trinkliebenden* (1621), 19. Concerning these drunkard princes see v. Weber, *Kurfürstin Anna*, 227–229. Of Ludwig von Anhalt, Eremita writes: 'Potum . . . nulla necessitate ad enormes et immodicos haustus patria consuetudine trahebat.' Le Bret, *Magazin*, ii. 344.

we read: 'My brother Passow and Rosen have had a shindy; my brother struck out at Rosen with a sword, and his pistol went off. My brother's wife swooned away three times and had to be restored with water and balsam.'—'Count Henry of Stolberg spoke to my brother and told him that he ought to have some respect for himself and his wife, whereupon my brother struck out at the Count also with his sword. In the tumult my brother's fool of a magister struck Rosen a blow on the head, and Rosen's boy left some wounds in the magister's body.'—'Gave a sound thrashing to a young page who had drunk himself so full that he could scarcely ride away.'—'Thrashed my valet with the horse-brush.'—'My lady mother sharpened her tongue on me: one has to forgive a good deal to these viragos.'—'Went as guest to the land-marshal Hennig Lützow; when I went to bed Vollrad Bülow rated the painter Daniel Block for a rogue and a fox, in return for which the painter beat him black and blue.'—'Christian Frederick Blom and Duke Ulrich have had a quarrel about Anna Rantzow, whom Blom calls a wh ——. Duke Ulrich says he will have to answer for all this, and that he 'd better leave him out of the talk, or he shall have to call him a rascally liar. . . . Dined at Verden with my mother's brother the Archbishop of Bremen, who made us drink great quantities of malmsey. After dinner, my uncle introduced his mistress or concubine, Gertrude von Heimbrock, with whom he ordered me to dance.'

The Pomeranian drinking orgies were also proverbial.[1] In Pomerania everyone who did not pledge in the customary manner had to submit to being 'ridden to the horse-pond.' Of one of the princes it

[1] Besser, *Beiträge zur Gesch. der Vorderstadt Güstrow*, ii. 237.

is said that 'he generally drank daily at least 20 great tankards of wine, and at convivial gatherings even more'; of another, that he was 'very much addicted to drink, whereby he was often moved to passion and wrath, the comrades of drink'; of a third, that 'he left his councillors to govern and gave himself up to drinking, which often led to much awkwardness.' When Duke Barnim died in 1603 'there was not much sign of mourning observed among the young lords': 'those whom on account of their position such conduct least of all became, were a good deal the worse for drink and enlivened the funeral with jokes and buffoonery.' The young duke Philip Julius began by entirely abjuring 'the deadly habit of drink,' and weaned his servants from it. But 'the miracle' did not last long; 'he soon turned round again and went back to the old German ways.' [1] Dearest brother,' wrote Duke Christian of Holstein in the spring of 1604 to Franz of Pomerania, 'I thank you heartily for the good company and the good drinking-bouts I enjoyed with you. I have no news to give you except that Henry von Dorten has drunk away his fine coat, and that we have had several good drinking-bouts. I shall soon come to you again. Farewell and drink well. Live according to the pastor's teaching: "after the holy days you are free to drink well and to let the heavenly sackbuts ring on." I should much like to know if you, all of you, have been as jolly tipsy as we have . . .?' [2]

True 'there were numbers of sober-minded, well-behaved people who asked themselves whether such drinking was really authorised by the divine Scriptures

[1] V. Wedel, 190, 388, 390–433, 453.

[2] *Baltische Studien*, ii., Heft ii. 172–173.

and the holy Evangel, as the princes continually reiterated in their letters, ordinances and commands to the people, and where in Holy Writ the texts sanctioning this habit were to be found.' 'To such questions, however,' says a Lutheran preacher, 'no answer has yet been given, and if one were to put the question publicly one would run great risk of being pronounced guilty of *lèse-majesté* ; for what the princes do is now always right, and we must not grumble, for tower and dungeon were not built for nothing.' 'If on the other hand it be asked who has given the incentive to all this drinking among the princes, which is such a terrible offence, and such a bad example to the people, and where the instigators are to be found, I answer that it is well known to many persons that in very many places it is largely the fault of the councillors who wish to govern alone, and who, when the prince is senseless with drink, have every opportunity of draining the land.'[1]

Thus in Brunswick, for instance, even since 1613 Duke Frederick Ulrich had been kept by his worthless favourites in a constant state of intoxication, to the ruin of the country.[2] The Reuss-Gera court-preacher Frederick Glaser spoke his mind freely in 1595 on the blamable habit of the 'princely drinkers' of leaving the affairs of State to their councillors, whereby 'affairs are so managed that bad becomes worse.' He knew from personal experience that there was no place where more was eaten and drunk 'than at the courts of great

[1] 'Von der jetzigen Werlte Läuften, eine kurtze einfältige und stille Predig von einem Diener am Wort.' Getruckt in *Ueberall- und Nimmerfinden* (1619), p. 3.

[2] Schlegel, ii. 377–378.

lords and princes, and this was the reason why everything went on so badly in the government.' 'It is impossible,' so he admonished the young princes of the land on their accession to government, 'that such drunkards should make good rulers. Young sovereigns should take warning by those who when they meet together think it the finest thing to sit for several hours at table, and whose best boast it is to make each other as tipsy as possible, so that they lose all their senses.'[1]

'Whereas in Italy and Spain,' wrote Aegidius Albertinus, 'the princes and lords sit, at the outside, two hours at table, the Germans go on champing and chewing and filling their stomachs for six, seven, or eight hours, and sometimes till day begins to dawn.'[2] 'Hence it is no wonder,' said another contemporary and 'Minister of the Word,' 'that such thousands of gulden are devoured every year at the courts of the princes and lords; the spices they use alone run away with many thousands.'[3] Duke Julius of Brunswick drew up a contract on February 18, 1574, with a Dutch merchant by which, up to Easter, for the sum of 4522 gulden, 5 groschen, and 6 pfennigs all sorts of spices and groceries were to be supplied to the prince's household at Wolfenbüttel, amongst other things 213 pounds of ginger, 313 pounds of pepper, 44 pounds of cloves, 48 pounds of cinnamon, 30 pounds of saffron, 30 pounds of anice, 150 pounds of large and small capers, $2\frac{1}{2}$ cwt. of olive oil, 10 cwt. of large and small raisins, 4 cwt. of almonds, and so forth.[4]

[1] In his *Oculus principis* (Leipzig, 1595) in Moser, *Patriotisches Archiv*, xii. 355–356.

[2] A. Albertinus, *Der Landstörtzer*, 293–294.

[3] *Von der jetzigen Werlte Läuften*, see above, p. 240, n. 1.

[4] *Zeitschr. des Harzvereins*, iii. 312.

'As if for a memento for all after ages, of how much was drunk at their courts,' said another preacher, 'some of the princes have gigantic beer-barrels constructed at a heavy cost to the land and the poor sweated vassals, as for instance the world-famous tun at Heidelberg, and one at Gröningen in the Halberstadt district, which I myself have seen exhibited as a new wonderwork.'[1] The last of these two was constructed, in the years 1580–1584, by order of Duke Henry Julius of Brunswick, bishop-elect of Halberstadt, by Michael Werner of Landau, who also made the Heidelberg barrel. The cost of this Bacchanalian monument, without counting the wood, was over 6000 Reichsthaler; it contained over 160 fuders of wine (a fuder = six ohms); its praises were widely sung, and in a religious play by the preacher Balthasar Voigt, written for performance in schools, 'The Egyptian Joseph,'[2] it was described minutely as a most marvellous structure.[3]

The fiercest indignation was aroused among the people by the 'princely orgies' of many even of the bishops. When the electoral councillor Melchior von Ossa visited Count Franz of Waldeck, Bishop of Münster, Minden and Osnabrück, in 1543, with a view to enlisting him in the Smalkald League, he reported that 'the Bishop had been engaged almost day and night in jovial drinking, especially with Hermann von der Malsburg, so that when towards morning he wanted to go to bed it was necessary to have four or six men on each side of him

[1] *Von der jetzigen Werlte Läuften*, see above, p. 140, n. 1.

[2] See our remarks, vol. xii. p. 26 f.

[3] Fuller details about this barrel are given in the *Zeitschr. des Harzvereins*, i. 74–76, 77, 93–98.

to drag him along. Even then he fell back again once. When he was thoroughly drunk the trumpets and drums were struck up.'[1] Count John of Hoya, Bishop of Osnabrück, Münster and Paderborn, also loved hard drinking-bouts.[2] Concerning the deposed Cologne Archbishop, Gebhard Truchsess von Waldburg, it says in a letter of 1583: 'No day passed by in which he did not get drunk—often several times in the day, and the way in which when drunk he could curse and swear was well known to those around him.' At the court of the Bamberg Bishop John Philip von Gebsattel the condition of things was so terrible owing to excessive eating, drinking, and immorality that 'it was a doubtful matter,' so wrote Bishop Julius of Würzburg to Duke Maximilian of Bavaria in 1604, 'whether there was *one* sober, virtuous person there.' Likewise at the court of the Salzburg Archbishop Wolf Dietrich von Raittenau there was 'overmuch that was scandalous and appalling.' When the Jesuits once reproached him seriously for his conduct Wolf Dietrich called them 'the devil's house villains.'[3]

A true insight into the 'princely drinking orgies' of the sixteenth century is given by the Silesian knight Hans von Schweinichen, who acted as agent, chamberlain, court marshal and escort to two dukes of Liegnitz on numbers of visits to German courts, and kept a diary of his experiences and of those of his lords at the banquets which he attended with them, and the drinkings which he had to take part in.

After telling of his abjuration of the Protestant faith and describing his ancestry, he gives a short account of

[1] See our remarks, vol. vi. p. 225. [2] M. Lossen, *Der Kölnische Krieg*, 232.
[3] See our remarks, vol. ix. pp. 204, 377 f.

his youthful years and his studies in company with a noble of Logau and with the young Duke Frederick von Liegnitz, whose father, Duke Frederick III., had been since 1560 kept prisoner in the castle of Liegnitz by his eldest son, Henry XI. 'We were obliged also to wait upon the old gentleman in his bedroom; also frequently, when their princely graces had a drinking-bout, to lie down in his room, for "princely graces" do not like to go to bed when they are intoxicated. But their graces, while in custody, were Godfearing; evening or morning, drunk or sober, they always said their prayers, and all in Latin.'[1] For having, by command of the captive Duke, laid a pasquil against the court-preacher Leonard Kräuzheim, 'a vagabond Franconian fellow,' on the preaching stool in the castle church, Schweinichen was obliged to leave the court for a time. With his father he went about to weddings and christenings, and was a generally prized 'master of drinking.' 'In former times it had happened to him to fall under the table and be incapable of walking, standing, or speaking, and to be carried away as if dead.' Soon, however, he was able to say that 'he considered it impossible for anyone to make him thoroughly drunk.' 'In no company,' he boasts, 'was there ever any ill-will towards me; for I ate and drank with them all half or whole nights at a time, and was always ready to do what was wished.'

In 1571 'there was a pack of lewd fellows in the land who were called "The Seven and Twenty," who had sworn together wherever they went to commit indecencies and to behave as offensively as they could.

[1] Concerning the doings of Frederick III. before his *Custodia*, see our remarks, vol. vi. 391 ff.

For instance, none of them were to pray, nor to wash themselves, and they were to stop short at no sort of sacrilege; often there were four or five of them together at my father's house, but though I sometimes was in their company I never took part in their offensive behaviour.'

During the journeys which Schweinichen made with Duke Ulrich he had everywhere the glory of being the last on the 'battlefield of the drinkers'; 'the fame of his drinking powers went from one court to the other.' At Zelle, at Duke William of Lüneburg's, the Liegnitz and Lüneburg squires were obliged to 'drink for the places reserved to them: there also I remained on my seat to the end, together with a Lüneburg squire; it was a dead heat between us.'

In the masquerades which were often connected with these revellings, as a sign of evangelical feeling, the monastic life of the Catholic Church was ridiculed. 'Princely Highnesses,' says Schweinichen in 1574, 'were at this time over jovial with dancing and drinking, and especially in giving "mummeries." This went on for nearly a whole year every evening in the town at the burghers' houses. Some of them were glad to see their princely Highnesses, others were not. There were generally four monks and four nuns, and his princely Highness always represented a nun.' The Duke also went to other places 'in a great wagon in this mummer fashion'; Schweinichen, however, as he writes, cared very little about it, for 'in these masks it was a curious arrangement that the young ladies always "stepped out" with the nuns (one young woman with another young woman) and not with the monks.' 'Once when the Duchess refused to sit at table with her husband's mistress the Duke gave her a good

box on the ears which made the princess stagger. I rushed up and caught her grace in my arms and held her up until she could escape into her own room. My lord, however, wanted to follow her and give her some more blows, so I ran quickly after her and shut her door so that his grace could not get in. Whereupon his princely Highness was somewhat enraged against me, and informed me he didn't want to be tutored by me; she was his wife, and he could do as he liked with her.'

Wherever they went Schweinichen was obliged to wait upon the Duke at his carousals and fight out his drinking duels for him. At Dillenburg, at Count John of Nassau's, where drinking was kept up for five days, he won especial glory. 'In the morning the Count gave me a welcome. When, however, on the first evening I had the glory of outdrinking all the Count's servants, the Count thought he would revenge himself secretly on me with the "great welcome," which consisted of about twelve flagons of wine. Now I was very anxious to "hold the fort," as on the previous evening, so I took the challenge from the Count, went to the door and tested myself as to whether I could empty a twelve-bottle bumper at a single pull, and I found that I could. When I had made this trial of my skill I had the bumper filled again and begged the Count to allow me to drink to his servant. The Count had already been told of this and was well pleased. So I offered to have a single-pull drink with the marshal. The marshal objected, but the Count insisted on his drinking with me. When I drained the beaker a second time all the lords were astonished; but the marshal could not respond to my toast at one

gulp, and so he was punished by having to drain the goblet twice, but only with a number of gulps. The marshal was so tipsy that he had to be led away. I, however, sat the meal out.'

When Duke Henry was deposed by the Emperor on account of his disorderly household and his treacherous intrigues, Schweinichen entered the service of the new duke, Frederick IV. He became his marshal of the household and went on regularly every week keeping account of the banquets at which he, with his new master, had 'drunk stiffly.' In 1589 he accompanied Frederick to Holstein, where the Duke espoused the daughter of Duke John. 'The great drinking orgies that went on daily can easily be imagined. In the morning when we got up there was food put on the table and we drank till the regular meal-time; and from the regular meal-time again until the time of the evening meal; those who then "were ripe" dropped off.' In Berlin also, where Frederick IV. visited the Elector of Brandenburg in 1591, there was 'good strong drinking at the morning meal.' On the day of departure 'there was a great drinking-bout at breakfast, so that master and servants got thoroughly tipsy.' 'On the way I observed that my valet had been displaced from his seat on the coach by the drummer (who always rode on horseback, but was now quite drunk), and that my man was obliged to run alongside of the coach.' Schweinichen would not put up with this 'slight' to his personal dignity and complained to the Duke, and 'because one word led to another,' he writes, 'his princely grace became enraged and was about to spring at me with his rapier: I did not budge, but stood ready with my own rapier.' A good drink

reconciled the angry pair. At Liegnitz the prince and his servants spent nearly every day in rioting; even before they got up in the morning 'great drinking-bouts began.'

The Elector Palatine Frederick IV., according to Schweinichen's account, was distinguished even beyond all the great lords already mentioned, and beyond the young Duke of Brunswick who tried to make Schweinichen 'drink himself dead,' for Frederick IV. could do nothing else but tipple. Whole weeks together were spent by Schweinichen and his duke at the Electoral Court in drinking all day long. The same thing went on at Sultzbach, where the Elector and his guests went to stay with the Count Palatine Otto Henry.[1] 'For the putting down of excessive drinking,' this same Elector Frederick IV., towards the end of 1601, was made 'Patron' of a Temperance Order founded by the Landgrave Maurice of Hesse. For the space of a year each member had to pledge himself, on pain of serious punishment, not to have more than two meals within twenty-four hours, and not to drink more at each meal than seven regulation beakers of wine. The size prescribed for these beakers is not mentioned. 'In order also that no one might have to complain of thirst, each member should also be allowed, at both meals, to drink beer, mineral waters, julep, and other nasty beverages of the sort'; foreign and spiced wines,

[1] See our article, 'Aus dem Leben deutscher Fürsten im sechzehnten Jahrhundert,' in the *Histor.-polit. Bl.* (1876), vol. lxxvii. 351–364, 428–444. Schweinichen's *Denkwürdigkeiten*, newly published by H. Oesterley, Breslau, 1878. ** A collection of accounts of the ceremonial at different princely festivities, weddings, funerals, &c., &c., made by Schweinichen was first published by K. Wuttke under the title *Merkbuch des Hans von Schweinichen*. Berlin, 1895.

mead, and intoxicating beer were not allowed.[1] But the Patron of this Order himself brought on his own premature death by excessive drinking. Landgrave Maurice also, the founder of the Order, although a man of learning and of many-sided culture, was by no means free from this vice. When once he visited the Elector of Brandenburg at Berlin with a large retinue, 'master and servants, after a ten days' stay, went to Spandau in such a mighty state of intoxication that they could scarcely find the gate of the town.'[2]

At the Hessian Court, at an early date, 'matters were no better than elsewhere in respect of strong drinking.' Landgrave Philip spoke from long experience when in 1562 he wrote to Duke Christopher of Würtemberg: 'The vice of drunkenness has become so common both with princes and people that it is no longer looked on as a sin.'[3] The year before he complained to the same Duke: 'Rumour has reached us that our three sons, William, Ludwig, and Philip, are carrying on immoral intercourse with certain women. . . .' He had called them to account, he said. They did not deny the excesses, but did deny most emphatically that they had used violence with the daughters of the populace, &c., &c. The Landgrave begged that the Duke would take his son Ludwig into his court and lead him to the fear of God: he was an upright, pious young fellow, and a good sportsman: 'he is fond of drink, certainly, and it is not good for him, for he has at times suffered from serious illnesses.' He therefore begged the Duke not to allow him 'to go out at night

[1] 'Die Statuten des Ordens,' in Rommel, ii. 357–361.

[2] Buchholtz, *Versuch*, iii. 479, note.

[3] Spittler und Meiners, *Göttinger histor. Magazin*, iii. 740 ff.

into other houses, or to disport himself in the streets at night.'[1] The worst offender in drunkenness and in the vilest profligacy was Christopher Ernest, one of Philip's sons by his liaison with Margaretha von der Sale. This prince carried on in such an appalling manner at the castle Ulrichstein that the three Landgraves, William, Ludwig, and Philip, in 1570, came down upon him with 300 horse and 500 foot soldiers and took him prisoner. They had felt compelled to take this step, they said, on account of his 'uninterrupted course of scandalous vice, and in response to the complaints, prayers and distress of the highly aggrieved parents of the disgraced children.'[2]

When Duke Christopher of Würtemberg, at the desire of Philip of Hesse, took the latter's son Ludwig into his court, he wrote to the Landgrave: 'So far as drinking goes, we are aware that his Highness has drunk more than he can well bear, but his Highness will not, when with us, have the same opportunities and enticement to excessive drinking.'[3] And yet Christopher himself, no more than Albert V. of Bavaria, had any great reputation for sobriety. When the young Landgrave Ludwig, in 1561, was at a royal baptism at Neuburg, his father, Elector Frederick III., wrote: 'If only my son can keep free from drink in the presence of Duke Albert of Bavaria and Duke

[1] Moser, *Patriotisches Archiv*, ix. 123–132.

[2] v. Weber, *Kurfürstin Anna*, 300–401, where there are fuller details about the scandalous proceedings of Christopher Ernest.

[3] Moser, *Patriotisches Archiv*, ix. 132–136. ** In a letter of Count George of Würtemberg to his nephew Christopher on October 23, 1553, it says with regard to immoderate drinking: 'You know well and have often experienced that it is very bad for you and leads to disastrous results.' Kugler, *Herzog Christoph*, i. 398.

Christopher of Würtemberg; asthma is now playing the deuce with him.'[1] With his own sons Christopher had much trouble owing to excessive drinking. After a journey to Darmstadt with his eldest son Eberhard, in the summer of 1565, he was obliged to reprove him for his insobriety: 'During the whole journey there and back you were drunk nearly every day twice a day, not to speak of your disorderly behaviour all night, drinking, screaming, bellowing like an ox, wherever we were, at Darmstadt, Heidelberg, and elsewhere; since then there have been very few days when you have been sober, and you are drinking away your young life, health, strength, understanding, reason, memory, yea, verily, your soul's salvation and eternal life.'[2] His son Ludwig also, who succeeded him in the government in 1568, was from his youth addicted to drink, and it was his favourite diversion 'to drink others on to the floor.' At a boar-baiting he made two Reutlingen delegates and the town syndicus, whom he had invited to the hunt, so dead drunk that they were taken away unconscious in a cart; he had a wild boar fastened behind them, and sent them home in this fashion.[3] At last he did not know what sobriety was. His Privy Councillor, Melchior Jäger, on September 9, 1591, reproached him with having reduced inordinate drinking to such an inveterate habit, and asked him what other people must be thinking of his princely Highness who was now incapable of knowing what soberness meant.[4] All the same, after the death in 1593 of this Duke, who received from his court-preachers the surname of 'the Pious,' an official panegyric was distributed through

[1] Kluckhohn, *Briefe* i. 209.
[2] Pfister, ii. 59ff.
[3] Sattler, v. 135.
[4] *Ibid.* 134.

the land, saying that 'all the days of his life he had followed godly conduct, and had been a sincere enemy of all sins and vices,' that in Würtemberg and other lordships 'he had extended the kingdom of Christ.' Whereas, however, 'the great and glorious gifts and graces which the Almighty, in the person of this illustrious prince, had showered on the land, had unfortunately been little recognised, God, in punishment of the land, had removed this godly prince by a swift and all too early death.'[1] 'To whom would it be possible,' asks

[1] Moser, *Patriotisches Archiv*, ii. 129–140. Strange it is that Moser could describe the official panegyric as 'a touching proof of the love of the country.' The court preacher, Lucas Osiander the Elder, excused the insobriety of the Duke in the following words: 'Although at times his Princely Grace, to satisfy the demands of his constitution, or when after a journey, or after much and weighty business he was tired and exhausted, would refresh himself with generous drink, not always observing the rightful measure, this did not happen from any evil intention to disgrace himself or others with overmuch drinking, but it came from pure good-heartedness and the desire of his Princely Highness to make his guests merry and jovial at his table; nobody at such times ever heard an angry or improper word proceed from his lips, but only friendliness; he usually had religious hymns sung at such times, in order to be kept in mind of godliness and the fear of God.' See extracts in Strauss, *Frischlin*, 573. 'All that in the poor is made punishable,' says Hans William Kirchhof in his *Wendunmuth*, 'is idealised and made the best of with the rich, in so much that when they indulge day after day in banqueting, drunkenness and debauchery, they are proclaimed altogether free from insobriety and lust.' 'If they go to bed on their heads,' says Glathart Seidenweich: 'what think you, was not our Lord right merry?' See G. T. Dithmar, *Aus und über H. W. Kirchhof* (Marburg, 1867), p. 39. ** Noteworthy is the manner in which Bucer 'whitewashed' the immoderate drinking of Duke Ludwig II. of Pfalz-Zweibrücken. This prince died when only thirty years old (Dec. 3, 1582) of consumption brought on by constant indulgence in alcoholic liquors. With his love of drink he combined other vices, so that after his death the new religionist preacher Schwebel was in sore perplexity as to the funeral sermon he was expected to preach. He turned to Bucer for advice. Bucer answered: 'Your prince was afflicted with great faults, but there was also an immense deal of good in him, for he heard the word of God gladly. Now it is a great thing to hear the voice of God and not to set oneself hostilely against

a contemporary, 'to count up all the evil examples which are set by the prince's courts, the counts and lords and all the great people, with their inhuman drinking and debauchery, not to speak of immorality of all sorts, while all the time, as nobody can deny, the poverty of the land increases from year to year! To heaven goes up the sound of all that we hear about every day at the courts, especially at princely visits, and at festivities, such as weddings, christenings and suchlike.'[1]

When the Dukes Frederick William and Hans of Saxe-Weimar, 'in company with several counts, barons, and other nobles, visited the Landgrave Louis of Hesse at Marburg in 1590, they began at breakfast on July 8 by drinking a fuder and three-quarters of wine (a fuder = six ohms) and $11\frac{1}{2}$ quarts of Paderborn beer.' At night 'one ohm and nine quarts of wine were given in Duke Frederick's bedroom to those who had been playing cards there, and to others who had been in attendance.' 'The total quantity served at the evening meal before the sleeping draught was 1 fuder (150 gallons), 13 viertel (quarts), and $3\frac{3}{4}$ mass, 2 mass of Spanish wine, 16 viertel of Paderborn beer.' The next day, when Landgrave William IV. of Giessen had also joined the party, 'there were served for early morning and forenoon drinks 2 fuders (= 300 gallons), 11 quarts of wine, and 12 quarts of Einbeck beer;

it, as do those who are not born of God. Then also he was faithful to his promises, which is certainly a great virtue in high personages, especially in princes; also he took no delight in bloodshed. The scandalous vice of drink did not, however, so greatly ruin his noble mind, as to make him proceed inimically against the Kingdom of Christ (that is the new doctrine). This is a certain proof that he was a child of God; for those who are not born of God cannot bear or tolerate God's word.' *Centuria epistolarum ad Schwebelium* (Bipont, 1597), p. 191. *Histor.-polit. Bl.* 107, 658 ff.

[1] *Von der jetzigen Werlte Läuften*, pp. 5–6.

for the evening meal, 2 fuders, 1 ohm (30¼ gallons), and 5 quarts of wine, ½ quart of Einbeck beer; for the "nightcap" 6½ quarts.' On the 11th and 12th July the quantity drunk was 2 fuders, 5 ohms, 19 quarts, and 3½ fuders of spiced beer.'[1] At the wedding of Princess Anna of Saxony with William of Orange, which took place at Leipzig in 1561, 3600 firkins of wine and 1600 barrels of beer were drunk.[2] The consumption at the wedding of Günther XLI. of Schwarzburg with the Duchess Katharina of Nassau in 1560 was incomparably greater. The 'veritable accounts' of these festivities, still extant, give the following figures: '20 barrels of malmsey, 25 barrels of Reinfall, 25 fuders of Rhenish wine, 30 fuders of Würzburg and Frankfort wine, 6 fuders of Neckar wine, 12 barrels of Brayhahn, 24 tuns of Hamburg beer, 12 barrels of Einbeck beer, 6 barrels of Gosse (a kind of light-coloured beer), 6 barrels of Windisch beer, 6 barrels of Neustädt beer, 10 barrels of Arnstadt beer, 30 barrels of Zelle beer, 10 barrels of English beer, 12 barrels of Muhme, 100 barrels of spiced beer'; 'this calculation does not include all the herbs that were used such as hart's-tongue, sage, mug-wort, and suchlike.' Also, in the parsonage for the wagon drivers and other menial servants, 1010 firkins of 'Landwein' and 120 barrels of beer are entered. The consumption of spices of all sorts corresponded to that of drinks. 'For persons both of high and low rank there were procured amongst other commodities, 120 stags, 126 roes, 150 wild boars, large and small, 850 hares, 20 mountain-cocks, 300 partridges, 35 heath-cocks, 200 snipes, 60 hazel hens,

[1] *Die Vorzeit*, Jahrg. 1824, pp. 286–291.
[2] Weck, 351. Vulpius, i. 201–202.

85 " schock " (a " schock " = three score) of fieldfares, 150 Italian cocks, 20 swans, 24 peacocks, 14 " schock " Endvögel, 8 " schock " of wild geese, 100 oxen, 1000 wethers, 70 " schock " of hens, 45 " schock " of tame geese, 172 capons, 245 sucking pigs well roasted, 200 sides of bacon, 8 bullocks, 150 gammon of bacon, 16 fatted pigs, 200 barrels of preserved game, 120 " schock " of large carps, 21 cwt. of pikes, 4 cwt. of large eels, 7 fuders of crabs, 3 tons of salted pikes, 6 tons of salted salmon, 2 tons of sturgeons, 1 ton of salted eels, and a great many other kinds of fish food.'[1] At the dinners of the princes on the occasion of weddings and christenings, 80, 100 and even 200 different viands were served up,[2] the last number being that of the dishes at the high banquet of Duke William of Bavaria in 1568. ' Very expensive it was for everybody ' at

[1] Vulpius, x. 187–190. Cf. the list of provisions consumed at the wedding of the Margrave Sigismund at Königsberg in 1594. Vulpius, i. 202–203. At the wedding of Duke Eric the Younger of Brunswick in 1545 the consumption was 124 oxen, 36 bullocks, 200 wethers, 3057 chickens, 572 sides of bacon, and so forth ; 800 malters of rye, 44 malters of rye baked for the dogs, and so forth. *Archiv des Histor. Vereins für Niedersachsen* (Jahrg. 1844), pp. 304–306. At the wedding of the Saxon Elector Christian II. in 1602, the number of tables ' laid for the ordinary household, exclusive of the princes' tables and others, was 180 every day.' Müller, *Forschungen, Lieferung*, i. 148.

[2] For instance, the bill of fare for a small dinner party in February 1565, at the christening of a son of Prince William of Orange, was: ' First course: Red carrots, endives, pomegranates, citrons, parsley, salad imperial, young fowls stuffed, green (young) veal, roast capons, blancmange tarts, stuffed mutton, little pasties, English pasties, hot game pasties, young goats roasted, roasted pheasants, spoon-bills, doves, herons, wild geese and peacocks. Second course: Boiled mutton, boiled lamb, young geese boiled, young fowls boiled, wild boar, stag cooked in pepper, hot capon pasties, pasties of lamb, pasties of finches, veal pasties, stuffed pasties, roast veal, gigots of mutton with hachée, roast field-fowl,' and so on through four courses and nearly sixty more dishes. v. Weber, *Kurfürstin Anna*, 104–107.

the marriage celebrated in November 1609 between Duke John Frederick of Würtemberg and the Brandenburg Margravine Barbara Sophia. 'The high princely gaieties lasted full eight days. There were gathered together 17 princes and 22 princesses, 5 royal and princely ambassadors, 52 counts and barons, over 500 nobles, and 100 countesses and noble matrons and young ladies, and about 2000 burgher attendants. The dinner at the princes' table consisted of two courses of forty dishes each, and a third course at which sweetmeats of all sorts were served up. There was game of every kind, wild ducks, pheasants, swans and peacocks, chamois and stags, salmon, lampreys; artistic dishes representing objects in ecclesiastical and secular history —for instance, Mount Helicon with the Hippocrene, the Muses and Pegasus, the Actaeon "with a jovial hunt," and the Rape of the Sabines, side by side with Susannah, and the prophet Jonah in a ship in which were concealed sixty pleasant-smelling crackers, which went off one after another.'[1]

Hans von Schweinichen, as court-marshal to the Duke of Liegnitz, makes in his 'Merkbuch'[2] 'an approximate estimate of the expenses at a princely

[1] Description in Pfaff, *Miszellen*, 81–90. *Zeitschr. für deutsche Kulturgesch.* (Jahrg. 1859), pp. 266–271. The number of guests even at the festivities of the smaller princes often verged on the enormous. At the nuptials of Duke John Frederick II. of Saxe-Weimar with Agnes, widow of the Elector Maurice, in 1555, so many people were invited that 3700 riding horses and 500 carriage horses were requisitioned in the neighbourhood of Weimar. Kius, *Ernestinische Finanzen*, 12. ** Accurate lists of the guests present at the above wedding festivities, as well as of all the servants and attendants employed at the time, are given by Hans von Schweinichen in his *Merkbuch*. He gives 1200 horses as the average number.

[2] ** p. 8 ff.

wedding for eight days and 1200 horses.' According to his experience he reckoned it necessary to have '56 Polish oxen, 80 zeckels (a kind of sheep), 400 sheep, 80 calves, 30 fatted pigs, 10 bacon pigs, 50 sucking-pigs, 20 sides of smoked pig flesh, 100 smoked shoulders, 40 lambs, 30 Calcutta hens, 36 "schocks" of fatted hens, 5 "schocks" of fatted geese, 4 smoked brand oxen, 8 wild boars, 12 stags, 9 does, 50 roes, 200 hares, 6 "schocks" of partridges, 1 "schock" of hazel-cocks, 30 heath-pouts, 6 "schocks" of wild ducks, 100 "schocks" of small birds, 30 "schocks" of large birds, 50 firkins of butter, 150 "schocks" of eggs, half a Parmesan cheese, 20 Dutch cheeses, besides different kinds of fish; the spices also are reckoned up separately. As regards beverages Schweinichen thought it necessary to have 2 barrels of Reinfall, 4 barrels of muscatel, 2 barrels of Roschall, 300 firkins of Hungarian wine, 200 firkins of Austrian wine, 40 firkins of Rhine wine, 100 octaves of Schweidnitz beer, 100 quarts of Goldberg beer, 20 quarts of foreign beer, 20 quarts of Lübeck beer, 300 quarts of home-brewed beer.'

At the marriage of Duke John George of Brieg with the Duchess Anna of Würtemberg, celebrated at Brieg on September 16, 1582, the consumption in beverages was:[1] '788 firkins of wine of all sorts, 92 octaves of Strehlisch and Nimptsch beer, 60 octaves of Scheps (a kind of light beer), 170 quarts of barley and wheaten beer.'

At the marriage of Duke Frederick IV. of Liegnitz with Maria Sidonia of Teschen, celebrated at Liegnitz on January 20, 1587,[2] the quantity of provisions

[1] ** Schweinichen, *Merkbuch*, p. 27.

[2] ** *Ibid.* p. 68 ff.

consumed was: '54 Polish oxen, 6 cows, 97 goats, 267 sheep, 55 calves, 16 pigs, 46 sucking-pigs, 12 lambs, 8 wild swan, 12 stags, 9 heads of venison, 54 roes, 179 hares, 18 sides of bacon, 19 sides of smoked pigs' flesh, 26 Scholtern (?), 69 smoked bullocks, 33 "schocks" of hens, 12 hazel hens, 8 Calcutta hens, 5½ "schocks" and 5 partridges, 61 geese, &c.; various kinds of fish, and of beverages, 493½ firkins of Hungarian, Moravian, and other kinds of wine (to the amount of 1431 thalers, 13 groschen), 23½ firkins of Rhine wine (162 thalers), 4 firkins of Neckar wine (19 thalers, 26 groschen), 4 barrels muscatel (61 thalers, 25 groschen), 1 barrel Reinfall (19 thalers), 78 octaves of Scheps, 492 octaves of home-brewed beer, 85 quarts and 1 octave of Goldberg beer.'

A similar sort of catalogue is given by Schweinichen[1] for the third wedding of Duke Frederick IV. with the Duchess Anna of Würtemberg, widow of Duke John George of Brieg (October 24, 1594). The total expenses of these festivities for kitchen, cellar, and clothes for the court servants, was 15,088 thalers.

When Duke Frederick of Würtemberg received the Order of the Garter from James I. of England in 1603, he had a banquet prepared in the great Knights' Hall at Stuttgart, which recalled the times of Lucullus. The absent monarch, who had his own table to himself, was regaled with ninety different kinds of dishes, all so choice and well cooked that, as one of the company said, they might have delighted the palate even of an Apicius. All the dishes were prepared with so many rare and costly spices that when the covers were taken off they filled the hall with fragrant odours. Amongst the show dishes, which were also meant to be eaten, there

[1] ** *Merkbuch*, p. 149 ff.

were pasties of all sorts of the most ingenious designs and all the colours of the rainbow, also gold and silver; some of them represented birds, swans and cranes standing upright and stretching their necks forward, and many-coloured peacocks contemplating themselves in their own glasses. As for the fish, some were served up in their natural shapes, others gilded or silver-plated, coloured with all sorts of hues and enclosed in pastry. Amongst the show dishes, which were merely intended to be looked at, there figured on the table set apart for the king a Hercules of enormous size, with two men under his feet whom he was cruelly murdering with the jaw-bone of an ass. 'What savageness in the countenance,' writes an onlooker; 'what cruelty in the gestures! how artistic, how true to life it all is!' The table of Duke Frederick was adorned by a Minerva standing on crossed arches which rested on four pillars. On another table were five wild men made out of fresh branches of orange and lemon trees.[1]

[1] M. J. Schmidt, *Neuere Gesch. der Deutschen*, vii. 170–175. ** Concerning the outward appointment of the princes' wedding-tables, K. Wuttke remarks (*Merkbuch des Hans von Schweinichen*, p. xiii.): 'In striking contrast to this superfluity of luxury and over-refinement in the pleasures of the table was the meanness of the utensils and furniture used at weddings in the sixteenth century. The external fittings of a prince's wedding dinner table would seem to us very bare and homely in spite of the gilded show dishes and other conceits. Their own stock of silver hangings and covers for the walls, chairs, and benches was strikingly poor, and so they borrowed these articles in all directions, as also the necessary tin vessels, dishes, plates, tankards, and even tablecloths and napkins from the Corporations of the princely towns.' Thus at the wedding of Frederick IV. of Liegnitz, on January 20, 1587, the list of table apparatus and utensils borrowed in the town was, according to Schweinichen's calculation (*Merkbuch*, p. 65), '1000 pewter dishes, 59 dozen plates, 52 beakers and decanters, 48 common beakers, 213 candlesticks, 178 table napkins, 218 tablecloths, 30 copper cans, 48 pails, 36 large cans, 60 dozen tin and wooden spoons, 40 tables, 120 benches.'

Whereas in earlier times 'the pomp and splendour of princes' and lords' meals depended on the quantity of dishes served up, now it was not merely variety and choiceness that was aimed at, but also ingenuity and eccentricity.' 'The culinary business developed into such a high and important art that the Archduchess Anna Katherine of Tyrol compiled with her own hands for her five-year-old daughter a cookery-book, in which in 651 recipes she described every dish that had been prepared during the year in the kitchen of Archduke Ferdinand II. Amongst the multitude of directions for cooking meat dishes there were no less than 32 recipes for pigs' flesh.' [1]

The preacher Erasmus Grüninger said in 1605, that 'eating had become such a dainty and complicated business that more learning was required to make a cook than to make a doctor.' Gregory Strigenicius spoke to the same effect: 'Cooking has reached such a height of refinement that it is scarcely possible for any human being to learn and remember all it involves, still less to put it in practice. All sorts of big books are now written and published on the subject, giving directions for preparing every variety of dainty morsels and dishes. The old method of the Germans is no longer worth anything; everything must now be cooked in Italian, Spanish, French, and Hungarian fashion, with a Polish sauce, or a Bohemian gravy.' [3]

The best proof of this is the cookery-book of Marx Rumpolt, the master cook of the Elector of Mayence, published by Sigmund Feyerabend at Frankfort-on-the-

[1] Hirn, ii. 496–497. [2] Grüninger, 243.
[3] Strigenicius, *Diluvium*, 89.

Maine in 1581.[1] 'Amongst the secular arts,' he said in a solemn dedicatory preface addressed to the Electress Anna of Saxony, 'the culinary art was undoubtedly not the least; princes ought to attach more importance to their cooks than to all their other servants and officers, let them be ever so high and confidential; next to the *chef-de-cuisine* the cup-bearer held almost the highest and noblest office at the court of a prince or a lord.' Rumpolt, 'a Hungarian by birth,' had for many years, 'with great toil and labour,' pursued the art of cooking, had been at the courts of many lords, and, as he reiterated again and again in his book with great emphasis, 'had not presumed to describe a single dish which during his long and arduous service he had not made with his own hands.'[2] 'The skill' revealed in this book 'by which foods of all sorts are prepared in German, Hungarian, Spanish, Italian, and French ways is certainly great and rare,' and yet Rumpolt by no means considers himself the greatest culinary artist; he modestly exhorts his readers 'not to seek in his book so much for the grandeur of the art, as for his true and sincere desire to be of service to others: he only aimed at writing, as it were, an introduction to the subject, and spurring others on to further expertness and perfection.'[3] For instance, after describing in detail how from a Kastraun or wether forty-five different

[1] Without the consent of the author, Feyerabend published a new edition of this book in 1587, and thus got into hot water with Rumpolt. See Becker, *Jobst Amman*, 109–110. Pallmann, 56.

[2] Rumpolt, Preface; further, Bl. $4^a$–$6^b$ and clxxxiii. A copy of this extremely rare book is in the large collection of cookery-books of Herr Theodor Drexel at Frankfort-on-the-Maine, who kindly placed it at my disposal.

[3] Preface, $4^b$ and p. lxiii$^b$.

dishes could be made, he adds: 'You can make still more dishes than these from a wether, for this is only a short introduction, &c.'[1] With regard to oxen also he 'only described just a few dishes that could be made, i.e. 83 different kinds, which could also be made in the same way from a cow, &c., &c.' From a sucking-pig he taught 32 preparations, from a pig 43, from a young goat 34, from a stag 37, from a capon 44, from a pheasant 22, from a fieldfare 17, from an eagle 9. But as in the days of the Roman Caesars, so, too, the taste of this period called for all sorts of dishes of nightingales, lapwings, swallows, cuckoos and gold-crested wrens, which 'were good to eat roasted and made into pies.' 'Small birds of all sorts could be cooked in 17 different ways, but sparrows must not be eaten, for they were unwholesome. Wild and tame horses also came under the category of the art.' Likewise the unborn calf of does—a lordly dish!—snails and frogs. An artistic Ollapodrida contains 90 ingredients. Fishes and sweetmeats are prepared in endless variety. Pastry takes all possible forms: castles, men, and beasts.

Not without reason was it said of this book that 'as it was taken entirely from life one could clearly see from it to what a condition of perfection and luxury—a condition, indeed, highly distasteful to many thoughtful persons—the art of cooking had been brought in the very midst of all the excess of misery, wailing and poverty of these last distressful times.' 'It would seem as if, with all the hundreds of different dishes which according to this book people had set before them, they must indeed burst with eating,' 'and what incalculable expenses are involved in it all, and what hundreds and

[1] Bl. xxix.

thousands must be squandered on the innumerable other festivities, the fireworks, ring-running, carnival merry-makings, theatre-ballets and what not, which go on at the princes' courts, and which are described as though they were wonderworks and a proper princely recreation, while all the time the vassals are hungering and starving.' [1]

Magnificent displays of fireworks were among the favourite amusements of the princes. The Elector John George of Brandenburg, in 1586, when entertaining at Küstrin the Elector Christian I. of Saxony, the Count Palatine John Casimir and a few other princes, organised a grand pyrotechnical display which cost 6000 gulden.[2] Likenesses of the Pope, the Sultan, the Czar of Russia, the Khan of the Tartars were introduced into these fireworks and burnt; the expenses of the entertainment were estimated at 8000 ducats.[3] At a display of fireworks got up by the Landgrave Maurice of Hesse in honour of the christening of his son Otto in 1594, Mount Helicon, together with Pegasus, went off in flames, amid rockets and pillars of fire. In 1596, at the christening of his daughter Elizabeth, 'there was a grand pyrotechnical display in which 60,000 squibs and fire-spitting rockets were shot up with fearful and wonderful cracking and noise.' Another display in 1600 was of equal extent and grandeur.[4] Favourite representations in this line were Jason's theft of the golden fleece, the carrying off of Proserpine, the judgment of Paris, and other

[1] *Von den vielen Anzeichen so uns den nahe bevorstehenden schrecklichen jüngsten Tag verkündigen. Flugblatt* of 1593, pp. 3, 5.

[2] According to the present value of money, 80,000 marks.

[3] Moehsen, 551.

[4] Rommel, ii. 398. Vulpius, ii. 550. A display of fireworks got up by Frederick of Würtemberg in 1596 cost 1200 gulden. Sattler, v. 194.

mythological incidents; coins and medals were actually struck in commemoration of this festival.[1]

'Incomparably more wonderful and costly' were the masquerades, prize-shootings, ring-runnings, pastorals and tournaments which frequently took place at the different courts, and which often lasted weeks at a time. The descriptions and illustrations of these performances sometimes filled whole folio volumes. They were imitations of the pictures in the knights' books of knightly battles with magicians, fairies, sorcerers, dragons, and history and mythology were strangely jumbled up together.[2]

The Saxon 'Inventions' which were conducted by Giovanni Maria Nosseni of Lugano, who entered the Elector's service in 1574, were especially renowned. The wardrobe appurtenances were kept at Dresden in four large 'Inventionskammer,' the necessary stage apparatus and machinery in a special 'Inventionshaus.' An 'Invention' of the year 1601 cost over 3000 thalers, another the following year about 2800 thalers. One got up by Nosseni in 1598 for the Landgrave Ludwig V. of Hesse-Darmstadt cost nearly 4200 thalers, besides a present of 100 crowns to the artist.[3]

[1] Vulpius, i. 214 and x. 464 note. A picture illustrating a scene at the wedding of Duke John Henry of Cleves with the unfortunate Jacobäa of Baden, shows an obstacle race, and moreover at the very moment in which the barriers, by means of skilfully managed fireworks, are made to throw out flames and balls of light in all directions. Hollow spears were used which went off like fusees. At a tournament in Düsseldorf the earth burst open with thunder and lightning, causing wonder and fear to the spectators. *Zeitschr. für deutsche Kulturgesch.*, Jahrg. 1859, p. 327.

[2] See the descriptions of festivities of this sort in Vulpius, ii. 543–550; iv. 239–245; x. 464–469. See also Wendeler, *Fischartstudien des Freiherrn v. Meusebach* (Halle, 1879), pp. 106–107. Cf. Drugulin, 117, n. 1326.

[3] Fürstenau, 82–85.

On the occasion of a 'ring-running' performance at Dresden in 1582 in honour of the marriage of the Elector Christian I. three Saxon nobles rode forth as Venus, Pallas and Juno; Bacchus rode on a donkey between women making music; Actaeon, as a stag on horseback, was led by huntsmen with four nymph-musicians in a reservoir; a fool, a scholar, and a monk rode on horses with double heads; a lady on horseback dragged three knights after her with chains. The Pope also was led along on horseback; further, an angel with a dragon, an owl with a flaming nest on its head, out of which flew three young owls. At another 'ring-running' two years later the god Saturn appeared with a scythe and a child in his hands, and carrying several other children in a basket on his back; a Saxon nobleman sat as a sea-nymph on an elephant, whose coverings represented the sea and sea-animals; another nobleman on a winged horse with a Mercury's staff in his hand, was preceded by angels, on foot and on horse, carrying lances and sceptres.[1] When the Elector Christian II. of Saxony celebrated his nuptials in 1602 with the Danish Princess Hedwig, 'Four syrens,' it says in an account of the proceedings, 'of the most artistic description swam on the Elbe, accompanied by Neptune on a huge whale with four horses. The "ring-running" represented drawings of a Roman "Invention," of a Tartar "Invention" with winged serpents and monkeys, an "Invention" of gipsies, another of young ladies in brown and flesh-coloured gowns, with mirrors, swords and fiddles, and an adventurer in a golden breastplate with a burning heart. Then came a monk with a wheelbarrow in which was an old woman; other monks followed with

[1] See Andresen, ii. 4–8.

bundles of straw on their backs in which were fastened women whose veils and legs hung out; the champion was dressed in nun's clothing. Then came a procession of negroes and savages, a cart with Venus, and a herd of savage women decked with some slight green drapery on one side. In the procession of hunters there was a dragon that spat fire, and a mountain on which sat a maiden and a bear. In the fencing match held at the castle nobody received money unless he had made his opponent bleed; two of the fencers had each an eye almost put out, one had an arm almost broken in two, many left the scene with bloody heads.' [1]

In describing the festivities at the baptism of the Brandenburg Margrave Christian the registrar of Cölln on the Spree writes: 'On February 27, 1581, the lordships and their servants and court retinue dressed themselves up in all sorts of colours, fine silks and other clothes, some like mountain folk, some like monks, who had young nuns behind them on their horses, some like lions, bears and elephants, some like peasants, and some also like young ladies, and they tilted at the ring with poles, and those who did it the best were presented with gold and silver drinking-cups and honoured with trumpeters and drummers riding before them.'

'On the same day also the son of the Elector of Saxony exhibited a very beautiful little model of a house exquisitely adorned with gold, silver, and silk tapestry, on which stood the figure of a boy clothed in coloured linen and representing Cupid, the son of Venus,

[1] Vulpius, ix. 325–329. ** See also the account of the procession of Duke Frederick of Würtemberg on February 21, 1599, in Scheible, *Schaltjahr*, iii. 115. Here, too, naked savages from America were introduced, besides a Venusberg from Arcady, and other out-of-the-way conceits.

clinging to an iron rod. This little house was drawn along by two swans, whilst very lovely music was played in it, and then several beautifully decorated doves flew out of it.' On March 1, Prince Christian of Saxony and Count Burkhardt von Barby appeared in a golden ship, which moved on wheels and was drawn by a long-bearded pigmy 'who behaved very strangely and grotesquely.' The next day 'at 10 o'clock in the evening a very pretty, well-furnished and painted little house, suspended on ropes, which had been constructed at the tilt-yards near the clock-tower, and filled with all sorts of artillery and explosives, was very cleverly set on fire by a flying dragon, and out of it burst several thousand squibs, wonderful to see and hear, and therewith ended the joyous christening in right princely and glorious fashion.'[1]

At the wedding of the Landgrave Otto of Hesse in 1613 the representation of Actaeon and Diana with her naked nymphs was followed by eight grotesque processions, then a shepherd's play, a company of seamen and Constantinople crusaders in red monks' hoods, accompanied by Jesuits and nuns, who were blowing pipes. The festivities concluded with grotesque encounters on land and water between dressed-up Hessian knights and giants, dragons and tyrants, fighting for enchanted or captive queens and their daughters, and an enormous display of fireworks, which lighted up the whole neighbourhood of Cassel.[2] At the wedding of Duke Louis Frederick of Würtemberg in 1617 a temple of Venus was erected in the great nuptial hall; Venus was represented standing, beautifully illuminated, on an altar, and in front

[1] Friedländer, xiv-xv, note.

[2] Rommel, ii. 397-398.

of her sixteen knights in white raiment, which they threw off to an accompaniment of music in order to appear in the ballet.[1]

French ballets became the fashion at German courts towards the end of the sixteenth century; tasteless and inartistic performances in which dancing alternated with dialogues, musical recitative, and sometimes also songs, duets, and choruses. They were generally arranged by the great lords themselves, who worked at the composition of the text and music and arranged the programme of the dances. 'You must be pleased to admire the ballets,' said a Dresden publisher of one of these atrocities, 'since they are the invention of persons to whom you cannot, without incurring much ill-favour, always speak the truth. It is not from ignorance that the Egyptians are placed under America, but those who were graciously pleased to make this arrangement have important reasons for it.' Dancing-masters and master-cooks were not seldom amongst the 'artists' most in request. At Dresden the 'springer,' Adrian Rothbein, whose business it was to instruct the youthful nobles in springing and dancing, had a yearly salary of 100 thalers; in 1602 he once received a gratuity of 1000 gulden;[2] extraordinarily high sums when compared, for instance, with the pay of professors at gymnasiums and universities.[3] Five Englishmen who were engaged to play at meal-times and 'to cause amusement by their skill in springing' had been receiving at Dresden, since 1586, free board at court, a yearly salary of 500 thalers, 40 thalers for house rent, and one suit of clothes.[4]

[1] Rommel, ii. 190 note.
[2] Fürstenau, 86–93.
[3] See our remarks, vol. xiii. 119 ff., 253.
[4] Fürstenau, 70–71.

Carnival—the three days preceding Lent—was always considered 'an especially blessed season for princely solemnities.' In 1609 the Lent festivities at Dresden, which were got up in honour of several princes and princesses on a visit there, lasted full eighteen days; within six days no less than forty-three 'ring-running' tournaments were held, and for three successive days a quantity of stags, roes, bears, pigs, foxes, wolves, and badgers were baited on the old market-place.[1]

Prize fights between wild animals were also sometimes arranged at these festivities, for the delectation of the personages of high blood. At an infant baptism at Dresden on September 26, 1614, a fight was got up in the market-place between bears, dogs, wild boars, and steers; at a sham chase and fight on August 7, 1617, eight bears, one of which weighed over 7 cwt., were seen among the wild animals. At a festival at Torgau animal baiting went on for three days; 'first three bears fought with oxen and English hounds in the open field; then twenty wolves were baited in the castle yard, and lastly five bears were set to fight with oxen and dogs.'[2]

'Such princely diversions as these,' some writer complains in a pamphlet, 'brought heavy expenses to many lands on account of the great cost of feeding such numbers of wild animals.' 'Other princes,' the same pamphlet goes on, 'take more delight in monkeys, which they buy for a large sum, and treat as though they were reasonable creatures.'[3] The Elector

[1] The painter, Daniel Bretschneider, had to represent all the 'Inventions' and processions on 66 folio pages. Sachsengrün, i. 184 ff., 232 ff., 247 ff.

[2] Müller, *Forschungen*, i. 144; *Annales*, 312. Grulich, 129–130.

[3] *Von dem vielen Anzeichen, &c.* See above, p. 263, n. 1.

Frederick IV. of the Palatinate once paid 15 Königsthaler for a monkey.[1] Landgrave George I. of Hesse had a monkey which on May 20, 1595, gave birth to a young one. The little creature was entrusted to the wife of a cook to be nursed and suckled, and the Landgrave, who at the time was at Schwalbach for a mineral water cure, was kept daily informed as to its health; a likeness of it, executed by the painter Peter, was sent to him, and 'he instructed the cook's wife,' so Joachim von Waldsburg, tutor to the young princes, reported, 'whenever she had suckled it to wrap it in a linen cloth and warm shawl, in which it lay wonderfully still at night.'[2]

## 2. Princely Finery in Clothes and Jewels—Games of Fortune and Gold-making

'In counting up the incessant carousals and drinking-bouts and the equally incessant festivities, and all else that was done for the sake of amusement, we have not by a long way,' so runs a complaint, 'got to the end of the expenses in which princes and lords involved the people. To these must pre-eminently be added the extravagant adornment of their persons with clothes of costly materials, with gold, silver and pearls for themselves and their belongings. This sort of thing is going to such inordinate lengths that it must before long come to a stop. Everybody must needs strut about blazing in silver and gold; fresh jewels are everlastingly procured, each lot always finer and costlier than the last. When weddings take place huge wagons are needed

[1] Wille, 255.

[2] *Archiv für hessische Geschichte und Altertumskunde*, xiii. 531–533.

for conveying all the grand clothes and finery, and one person outvies another, and ancient simplicity and domesticity are not to be met with any more.'[1] The court dress of a princess was as follows: on her head she wore a crown of pearls, or a crown with gold and pearls wound round it, or a coif of gold and silk stuff with pearl stars and gold loops. Round her throat was a necklace of emeralds, sapphires, rubies, and pearls, with a pendant of precious stones. On her shoulders she wore a collar either of gold or velvet, edged with gold or silver lace, or with ermine or marten; sometimes the collar was made of white damask inwrought with gold and trimmed with marten. This collar was fastened across the breast with a gold brooch which was always set with emeralds, sapphires, rubies, and amethysts, and had an emblem of some sort surrounded with precious stones. The gold necklaces were in part decorated with so-called mill-stones and crank wheels, gold pot-hooks, gold pears or other fruits. The sleeves were artistically embroidered with pearls which represented figures of all sorts, such as a bird-catcher, in four sapphires and five rubies, an emerald lily, three ruby roses and a diamond triangle. Quantities of costly rings of emeralds, turquoises, diamonds and rubies formed part of this splendour, and the girdle had pearl cords and gold fastenings.[2] The weight of the clothes and ornaments worn by princesses of that period on festive occasions may be put down at about 20 lbs.[3]

[1] *Von dem vielen Anzeichen, &c.* See above, p. 263, n. 1.

[2] From the description in Voigt, *Hofleben*, i. 130–132.

[3] See the *Zeitschr. des Vereins für Gesch. und Altertumskunde Schlesiens*, xiv. Heft ii. 417: The upper garment of the Duchess Barbara von Liegnitz-Brieg weighed 3 lbs., the pearl cloak 10 lbs., the great gold chain 2 lbs., and so forth.

The Electress Anna of Saxony wore veils on which were as many as 600 gold beads and as many as 600 pearls.[1] The young Princess Anna Eleonore of Hesse-Darmstadt, who was barely fifteen years old, possessed amongst others, in 1616, ten costly dresses, one of which was worth 3100 florins; and a skirt of cloth of gold, embroidered with pearls and gold, which had on it pearls to the value of 500 florins.[2] Amongst the possessions of the Archduchess Katharine of Austria in 1549, there were '7 necklets adorned with diamonds, rubies, and pearls, 19 chains and bracelets, 7 golden girdles, 12 bonnets, 27 golden coifs, and many other costly articles.'[3]

Like the princesses, the princes also on festive occasions hung themselves all over with gold chains, golden eagles, bracelets, medals, and suchlike, all set with precious stones, diamonds, rubies, and sapphires. Duke Albert of Prussia once had a neckband, made by the jeweller Arnold Wenck at Nuremberg, in which were 8 large and small sapphires, 11 ruby roses, 38 ruby grains large and small, 1 large diamond, 29 of various sizes and shapes, and 6 emeralds. For another diamond collar, the stones of which were ordered from Venice, the Duke paid the jeweller 2000 gulden. A medal ordered by him cost 682 gulden exclusive of the price of the work. From George Schulthess of Nuremberg he bought a collection of all sorts of jewels to the value of 4796 gulden.[4] The Elector Augustus of Saxony commissioned the Augsburg merchant Conrad Roth to bring him from Lisbon 'a string of large pearls to the value of about

[1] V. Weber, *Kurfürstin Anna*, 175.

[2] *Archiv für hessische Gesch. und Altertumskunde*, x. 430–432.

[3] Chmel, *Die Handschriften der Hofbibl. zu Wien* (MSS. of court library at Vienna), i. 245–259.

[4] Voigt, *Fürstenleben*, 241–245.

6000 ducats, an oriental loadstone of the best kind, an oriental sapphire to be hung at the neck, 300 fine cut cameos to hang on the arm, in short everything rare that came from India.'[1] A coat of violet velvet embroidered all over with spun gold, and adorned with 41 rubies and diamonds, was charged 5000 thalers to the Elector.[2] In the possession of the Elector Christian I. of Saxony there were '15 chains, 7 jewels, 75 rings, 13 bracelets, 23 rare articles of personal adornment, amongst them a chain which went four times round the neck, and to which the portraits of the Elector's ancestors set on both sides with 51 rubies and 4 large diamonds were hung by a massive pearl.'[3]

What immense sums were spent at the princely court at Wolfenbüttel on costly furs, amongst which sable ranked first, and on precious stones, is seen from contracts made in 1574 by Duke Julius of Brunswick with Hans Rautenkranz, burgher of Brunswick. On January 26 of this year Rautenkranz had charged 5600 thalers for sable; four weeks later there is an account for '6 skins of sable and 42 separate pieces of very fine sable at 5000 thalers; a very large emerald, 9000 thalers; a diamond, 3600 thalers; a white sapphire, 600 thalers; a four-cornered amaranth of emerald set in a ring, 200 thalers; a turquoise set with gold, 350 thalers: total, 24,350 thalers.'[4] Sums of this amount were spent in a single year.

The Landgrave Maurice of Hesse, as is reported, spent sometimes in one year as much as two tons of gold, about 200,000 gulden, in purchases at the Frankfort Fair.[5] At the Würtemberg Court there

[1] *Archiv für sächsische Gesch.*, v. 334.
[2] v. Weber, *Kurfürstin Anna*, 179.
[3] Richard, *Licht und Schatten*, 60.
[4] *Zeitschr. des Harzvereins*, iii. 310.
[5] Rommel, ii. 683.

was 'untold wealth of costly vessels and supercostly articles of adornment.' On the occasion of an archery contest at Stuttgart in 1560, the target-master Lienhart Flexel saw the ducal sideboard covered with large golden beakers and silver flasks. 'There were such a quantity of silver beakers,' he says, 'that I could not count them.' He also saw 'innumerable silver plates and dishes, with many thousands of gulden, for it is the fashion to eat off pure silver.'[1] 'Duke Frederick of Würtemberg appeared at a festival in 1605 sparkling with more than 600 diamonds.'[2] The most costly collection of treasures was that of Duke Albert V. of Bavaria. For a 'Ballas' and a diamond he once paid 24,000 gulden, for a jewel 10,500 gulden, for a jewel with pearls 12,000 crowns, for goldsmith's work which he had executed in Munich and Augsburg 200,000 gulden.[3] The Mayence Archbishop Albrecht of Brandenburg commissioned an Augsburg goldsmith in 1530 with the execution of a gold cross for which different jewels to the value of at least 40,000 gulden were used.[4]

To what an extent princely pomp in clothes and costly ornaments had increased in the course of the sixteenth century is notably seen by comparison with the wedding outfits of princesses of earlier times. When Anna, daughter of the Roman King Albert II., was married on June 20, 1446, to the Margrave William III. of Meissen, she had an outfit which was imitated in the following year by King Frederick IV. on the marriage of his sister Katharina with the Margrave Charles of Baden. Anna's trousseau con-

[1] *Zeitschr. für deutsche Kulturgesch.*, Jahrg. 1856, p. 198.

[2] Pfaff, *Gesch. von Wirtemberg*, ii[a]. 41–42.

[3] See our remarks, vol. xi. 197 ff.

[4] *Archiv für Unterfranken*, xxvii. 206.

sisted of ' 4 woollen cloaks for herself and 2 for each of her ladies-in-waiting, sleeves and jacket of damask for a gown and for another gown sleeves and jacket of "Zemol," a costly silk material. Further, 3 gold embroidered cloaks of velvet and damask, two trimmed with ermine and the other with sable, 2 velvet dresses and one of damask, trimmed with pretty fur; and a few "Joppen" and damask jackets besides.' Her stock of jewels was ' 2 necklaces, 12 clasps, 32 rings, finer and commoner, 4 marks' worth of pearls, 3 girdles, 12 great dishes, 4 small ones, 1 adder's tongue, 1 petrified fish tooth made into ornaments, 12 "Khopph" (a kind of beaker), 8 white beakers, 2 candlesticks, 12 spoons, 2 stands for knives and spoons, 1 ewer, 2 pairs of table-knives; a gilded carriage with six horses conveyed the bride to the bridegroom.' [1]

Very different from this outfit of a king's daughter in the middle of the fifteenth century were the outfits given to the daughters of princes after the middle of the sixteenth century. When, in 1560, Hedwig, daughter of the Elector Joachim II. of Brandenburg, was married to Duke Julius of Brunswick, she brought with her six costly necklaces, amongst which were: ' 1 necklace with a pendant: in the necklace 7 diamonds, 13 rubies, and 14 pearls; in the pendant 12 diamonds, 3 rubies, 1 emerald, and 7 pearls; 1 necklace with pendant: in the necklace 3 diamonds, 4 rubies, and 16 pearls; in the pendant 1 ruby, 1 emerald, 6 small diamonds, and 1 large pearl; 5 bracelets, two of which contained each of them 7 rubies and 30 pearls; 10 ornaments, amongst which one with an emerald, 2 diamonds, 1 ruby, and 1 large pearl; another ornament with 3 diamonds,

[1] *Zeitschr. für deutsche Kulturgesch.*, Jahrg. 1873, pp. 451–453.

1 ruby, 1 emerald, and 1 pearl; a diamond cross with 10 diamonds and 3 hanging pearls; 20 rings, one with 12 diamonds, another with 5 diamonds and 6 rubies; 9 gold chains, amongst which was a chain "of muzzle shape" which weighed 362 crowns, a mailed chain which weighed 326 crowns, another chain which weighed 329 Rhenish gold guldens. In her stock of silver there were, amongst other articles, 1 silver jug and beaker, 12 silver dishes, 12 goblets, 12 plates, 12 spoons. Her wardrobe consisted of: 8 dresses with full skirts of gold brocade, silk damask, satin and velvet, one of which was of bright golden yellow embroidered with 480 fine pearls, besides which there were 200 fine pearls for ornaments; 24 dresses with narrow skirts of gold brocade, silk damask, satin and velvet, amongst one with embossed gold and silver flowers, and a stomacher embroidered with pearls; 10 petticoats, one of which was red, embroidered with gold and edged with ermine; another of black velvet with a red gold border and edged with ermine; 4 lined dresses of gold brocade, satin, velvet, and silk damask; 5 mantles of velvet, satin, and silk damask, one of which was of black velvet with a quilted border and lined with marten; a red silk mantle lined with ermine; 42 coifs, mostly of silk, silver, and gold; 15 girdles, two with pearls, the others mostly of silver and gold; a petticoat of red silk and gold lace; 22 night-gowns, nearly all trimmed with silver, gold, and silk lace. She also brought with her two golden carriages with ten horses.'[1] In the case of the outfit of Princess

[1] Bodemann, *Herzog Julius*, 209–214. Cf. the 'Hochzeitsinventarium' of the Princess Elizabeth of Saxony of the year 1570 in the *Zeitschr. für deutsche Kulturgesch.*, Jahrg. 1870, pp. 391–397. Similar details about bridal outfits are given by Havemann, *Elisabeth von Braunschweig*, 107 ff.

Anna of Prussia, who was married in 1594 to the Elector John Sigismund of Brandenburg, the cost of the jewels alone amounted to 14,138 marks silver; a necklace with 32 diamonds, pearls, and golden roses cost 1487 gulden; another cost 3000; a third with 18 roses, amongst which were 5 ruby and 4 diamond roses, which came from Nuremberg, cost 3750 marks; a fourth gold necklace cost 3115 marks. The number of rings, most of them set with diamonds and rubies, was 144; 1745 marks were spent on pearls, and 265 marks for a gold chain. The quantity of material used for the bride's trousseau was '16 pieces of velvet, black, crimson, and orange-colour, 3 pieces of flowered velvet, velvet on a satin ground, 6 pieces of satin of different colours, 80 ells of "gladgolden" pieces, silver, white, yellow, violet, brown and green, 150 ells of striped gold and silver Taletha, 1500 ells of silver "Posament," 1150 ells of silver and gold "Steilwork," all sorts of gold and silver lace, and so forth.'[1]

The wealth of jewels, clothes, and other luxuries in the princesses' outfits were equalled by the wedding gifts. At the marriage of a prince of Jülich in 1585 the presents covered nine tables; they formed a splendid and costly collection of jewels, necklaces, chains, bracelets, medals, earrings, besides all sorts of drinking vessels in the shape of animals, fish, birds, and also ships and fountains.[2] The following is a list of the wedding presents of a princess of Würtemberg

[1] Voigt, *Fürstenleben*, 235; *Hofleben*, i. 100. ** In Pomerania the land had to bear the cost of the outfits of princes' daughters. At every marriage of the daughter or sister of a prince a so-called 'spinster-tax' was levied. See Spahn, *Verfassungs- und Wirtschafts-gesch. des Herzogtums Pommern*, xi. 115 ff.

[2] *Zeitschr. für deutsche Kulturgesch.*, Jahrg. 1859, p. 321.

in 1610: 'A necklace with 43 large pearls, worth 3225 gold gulden; a pearl chain of 2280 beads, worth 4564 gulden; an ornament with diamonds at 2000 gulden; a *parure* of diamonds and a gold chain at 1700 gulden; a diamond necklace, 1500 gulden; another, 1400 gulden; a third, 1600 gulden; a pearl chain, 4000 gulden; a *parure* with sapphires, 4000 gulden; another with diamond feathers, about 1000 gulden; a necklace with diamonds and rubies, 650 gulden; a pearl chain, 300 gulden; a pair of bracelets, 200 gulden;' the territory of Würtemberg presented her with a gold chain of five rows, worth 200 gulden.[1]

Amongst the principal mercantile houses which supplied the princes with all these costly articles (chiefly from Italy) were those of the Florentines Lorenz. de Villani at Leipzig, and Laux Endres Jorisani and Thomas Lapi at Nuremberg. But the great German trading houses also had their own manufactories for the production of the most splendid and costly gold and silver wares. From accounts and calculations in our possession we can give the following statistics of the high value of these goods. Thomas Lapi in 1535 estimated a piece of red-gold satin of 29 ells at 313 gold gulden; a piece of satin of drawn gold, 12 ells long, at 108 gold gulden; and a piece of silver satin of drawn silver, 12 ells in length, at 108 gold gulden. This same merchant, in 1536, sent Duke Albert of Prussia two pieces of fine gold and silver cloth, of which the gold piece, 38 Nuremberg ells long, cost 380 gulden, and the silver piece of 40 Nuremberg ells, 360 gulden. Two pieces of damask of red and ashen

[1] Moser, *Kleine Schriften*, ix. 330. Vulpius, iv. 245–247.

grey colour at 170 gulden were not thought good enough by the Duke for his and his wife's wear.[1] The Mayence Archbishop Albert of Brandenburg once ordered, through the Welsers of Augsburg, two cases of woollen and silk clothes from Venice, for which he remained in debt to the amount of 1500 ducats and 190 Venetian gold gulden.[2]

Amongst the 'many ways by which the princes' exchequers were plundered,' Melchior von Ossa, in a 'political testament' sent in to the Elector Augustus of Saxony in 1556, mentioned, in addition to their craze for building, 'their inordinate gambling.'[3] 'What frightful sums are squandered and lost, often in a few days or months, by this high playing, which is almost the daily diversion of princes and lords,' so runs a pamphlet, 'is shown from the experience of the treasury accountants who have to supply the princes with money and scarcely know how to produce any out of the exhausted coffers.'[4] Elector John Frederick of Saxony sometimes gambled away in one day 500, 700, 1000 gulden; in the years 1538–1543 he lost 19,282 gulden, in 1544, within twelve weeks, 12,344 gulden. John Frederick the Younger of Saxony, in 1555, when he was only seventeen years old, lost 300 florins, and four years later, 864 florins. Elector Joachim II. of Brandenburg gambled away in a short space of time 40,000 gulden.[5] In an account of the expenses of the Elector John Sigismund's Prussian journey from July 11, 1608, to August 23, 1609, the treasury secretary, John Grabow,

[1] Voigt, *Fürstenleben*, 237–240.

[2] *Archiv für Unterfranken*, xxvii. 201–202 note.

[3] See Glaser, 684.

[4] *Von den vielen Anzeichen, &c.* See above, p. 263, n. 1.

[5] Kius, *Ernestinische Finanzen*, 9; cf. 84.

says, concerning 'card money' for his lord on different days, 'the largest sums amounted in January 1609 to 55, 77, and 88 Reichsthaler; in February to 109, 135, 286; on March 2 and 5, to 333 Reichsthaler, and so forth.'[1] On May 10, 1613, the Elector, 'while playing cards with Maurice of Hesse and Joachim von der Schulenberg, sent for 233 thalers 8 groschen and paid the Landgrave 600 thalers, which he had lost to him at former games.'[2] The Elector Frederick IV. of the Palatinate lost, according to his account-book, from August 9–24, 1599, the sum of 290 gold gulden; on September 10, 50 gold gulden and 99 gulden; between September 16 and 18, 128 gold gulden, and so forth.[3]

'If the exchequers and purses of the princes and lords have been emptied by extravagant court retinues, banqueting, fireworks, tourneying, ring-running, by magnificent processions and masquerades, luxurious clothes and ornaments, jewels of gold and silver, pearls and diamonds, and last, not least, by building and gambling, the gold-makers (alchemists),' so said the preacher Leonhard Breitkopf in 1591, 'ought to come and fill their treasuries again, and make the princes into Croesuses once more: but these said gold-makers are the biggest and most shameless scoundrels, charlatans and vagabonds, they defraud princes, lords and people alike with inordinate prices and bring them to shame and derision.'[4] The preacher John Sommer of Zwickau, in his 'Geldtklage,' reckoned the gold-makers who 'insinuated themselves among princes and lords, nobles and commoners, as one of the causes why Germany

[1] *Märkische Forschungen*, xix. 355 ff.
[2] *Ibid.* xx. 26, note 1. [3] Wille, 265 ff.
[4] *Karfreitagspredigt*, Bl. B²; see our remarks, vol. xii. p. 293 f.

grew poorer every year.' 'Would God,' he exclaims, 'that the eyes of the Germans might be opened, so that they might take better heed to these money stealers.' [1]

These alchemists who pretended to make gold and silver out of baser metals formed part of the court retinue of most of the princes. Amongst many others the Electors of Saxony, of Brandenburg, and of the Palatinate, the Dukes of Brunswick, the Landgraves of Hesse had at their courts 'highly renowned laboratories' for the production of gold and silver; many of the princes also themselves diligently studied this 'sacred art.' 'My councillors,' wrote Landgrave William IV. of Hesse, in December 1571, to Duke Julius of Brunswick, 'are not well pleased with me for devoting myself to these arts; they would rather, as indeed it would be better, that I should remain in the chancellery, and watch over my own and my subjects' affairs; but who could sit there all day to be worried to death?' [2]

In Dresden the alchemists were in special request. The court laboratory there was called by the people the 'gold-house.' [3] The Elector Augustus of Saxony, in 1578, in a letter to an Italian alchemist, declared that he was already so far advanced in the art that out of eight ounces of silver he could in six days produce three ounces of purest gold.[4] The 'fire-workers' were also honoured officials at the court of Augustus and were richly remunerated by him, but if they became too mysterious they had to be put to torture to

[1] Olorinus Variscus, *Geldtklage* (Magdeburg, 1614), pp. 268-286.

[2] Havemann, *Gesch. der Lande Braunschweig und Lüneburg*, ii. 394. Kopp, *Alchemie*, i. 222 note.

[3] Kopp, i. 127.

[4] Vulpius, ix. 547-548; cf. iii. 25. v. Weber, *Kurfürstin Anna*, 273.

get at their secrets. In order to extract from the 'artist' Velten Merbitz the secret of making silver out of mercury the Elector in 1562 caused him to be put twice on the rack; the second time the man was kept two full hours in torture, till at last the executioner said he must stop if Merbitz was not to die under his hands. Another 'fire-artist,' Daniel Bachmann, who had promised to find the philosopher's stone, to handle and to coagulate it, and to make 1 cwt. of gold within four months, went mad in the course of his work. He was consequently bound with a chain which was fastened to the wall in such a manner as to allow of his reaching the oven in which his mixture was being cooked. The Elector said he had quite sufficient cause for punishing Bachmann in body and life, but as the man was not master of his reason he should be content with banishing him from the land; but if ever he showed himself again, he should without mercy have him put into a bag and thrown in the water.[1] With a third alchemist, David Beuther, who was at his court from 1575–1582, the Elector had also unfortunate dealings. He was so favourably disposed towards this man that he stood sponsor to one of his children, and then insisted that the wife of the alchemist should no longer address him as 'Your princely Grace,' but simply call him 'Herr Gevatter' (godfather). However, Beuther gave himself up to a dissolute life, and in spite of the promise he had made would not reveal the secret of his art. Accordingly the Elector issued against him a judicial sentence to the effect that 'owing to his perjury he was to be scourged, the fingers of both his hands were to be cut off, and he was to be imprisoned for life, so that he should not be

[1] v. Weber, *Kurfürstin Anna*, 275–276.

able to take his art to other courts.'[1] The Electress Anna helped on the chemical labours of her husband. At the Castle Annaburg she built an expensive laboratory with four chemical ovens, which were constructed in the shapes of a horse, a lion, a monkey, and an osprey, all life size. The osprey sparkled with golden wings and inside it was a so-called chapel. The building with its high chimneys looked like a many-towered church.[2] After the death of her husband 'she had all her household vessels,' so says a report, 'made of gold and walled up for future transportation; but not content with this she wanted to learn the secret herself.' So she threatened the imprisoned Beuther with death, unless he revealed his secret, and the alchemist poisoned himself. 'Her conscience was not very easy about the matter, and she commanded the executioner to keep silence over it.'[3] In order to extract his secret from the alchemist Alexander Setonius, the Elector Christian II. had him repeatedly tortured in 1603.[4]

At the court of Elector Joachim II. of Brandenburg, within ten years, no fewer than eleven alchemists were counted up who had dissipated considerable sums.[5] One of the most famous alchemists was Leonhard Thurneissen zum Thurn, house physician to Elector John George of Brandenburg, with whom numbers of princes and princesses were in personal and epistolary relations. Duke Christopher of Mecklenburg, Duke Ulrich zu Güstrow, the Electoral Princess Katharina von Küstrin, the Margravine Elizabeth of Ansbach, and

[1] Schmieder, 311–315. Kopp, i. 149. Köhler, xvi. 6–7.
[2] Vulpius, iii. 25 and x. 153.
[3] *Ibid.* x. 153–154.
[4] Schmieder, 342–343. Kopp, i. 127.
[5] Voigt, *Fürstenleben*, 344. ** Concerning gold-makers and alchemists at the Lippe Court, see Falkmann, 374 ff.

others used to send distillers and laboratory workers to him to learn from him all sorts of secret arts, which they would then carry on in their own laboratories. Thurneissen informed the Elector amongst other things that the water of the Spree carried in its course gold and a fine kind of glaze; the gold contained twenty-three carats and half a grain; in some places of the Mark, he said, rubies, emeralds and sapphires could be found.[1] 'In the holy Easter days (1583) John George appointed his court apothecary Aschenbrenner, who was specially fitted for the post, to help as a *laborant* in some occult metallic work which we were to execute under God's guidance and to work at in a special *laboratorium*.'[2]

The unfortunate Duke John Frederick II. of Saxony fell in great measure a dupe both to alchemists and angel-seers. On November 6, 1566, he had concluded a bargain with two preachers, Abel Scherding and Philip Sömmering, by which the preachers promised to teach the Duke the secret of the philosopher's stone, on condition that he 'would keep this gift of God to himself.' For their first experiment in the art he paid them 760 thalers.[3] Simultaneously with Sömmering there appeared in Gotha a former lady of the Dresden Court, Anna Maria von Ziegler, who, according to her own later confession, had drowned her illegitimate child, and at the instigation of Sömmering, with whom she had a *liaison*, had poisoned his wife. From Duke John Frederick, whom she entirely won over, she received a letter written in his own hand and with his blood,

[1] Kopp, i. 107 ff. See our remarks, vol. xii. 297–299.
[2] In v. Ledebur's *Archiv*, xv. 369–371.
[3] See contract in Vulpius, iii. 19–22.

saying that he should put away his own wife and marry her. Before the world, John Frederick had given her in marriage to his valet and court-fool, Henry Schombach, styled Schiel-Heinz (Squinting Harry). After the surrender of Gotha and of the Grimmenstein,[1] Sömmering, Schombach, and Frau Anna fled in 1571 to Wolfenbüttel, to try their luck at the court of Duke Julius of Brunswick. To their company belonged also the freebooter and highway robber Silvester Schulfermann, who gave himself out in Wolfenbüttel as Frau Anna's brother, and who was employed as assistant by Sömmering. Fuller details which came to light concerning the doings of these swindlers for many years at the court of Duke Julius, are of general importance in the history of civilisation, and all the more so as they are connected with the duping and fleecing of a prince who had made comprehensive studies in almost every branch of learning, and to whom the affairs of his country were by no means a matter of indifference.

While other princes 'are for the most part given up to the devil of chase,' Duke Julius wrote once to his stepmother, 'he was given up to the devil of the mines.'[2] Therefore Sömmering was welcome at his court if only for the promise that 'he and his associates were able to bring the mines of the country into such a condition that his Princely Grace would enjoy 200,000 a year more profit from them than before.' Besides this they would share with the Duke one ounce of the philosophical tincture whereby other inferior metals were turned into gold, and that ought to be worth a princedom, if not more. They would teach him the process, so that 'Illustrissimus' would become the mightiest potentate of all Europe.

[1] See our remarks, vol. vii. 393 f.

[2] Bodemann, 200.

All this, according to a formal agreement concluded in 1571, was to happen in the space of a year, in return for which the Duke gave the adventurers, together with Frau Anna, lodging, board and plentiful supplies of money besides a documentary promise of unlimited princely protection. Amongst their patrons and associates at the court was the pastor Ludwig Hahne, of Schlitz in Hesse, whom the Duke, on the recommendation of Sömmering, had appointed his court preacher and spiritual father, although the man was in disgrace with the Landgrave of Hesse on account of falsification of coin. Sömmering, who was appointed Treasury, Mines, and Church Councillor, soon acquired overweening influence both in religious and secular matters. A written document in his handwriting is signed: 'Philip Therocyclus, the prince's constant, faithful treasury-councillor, though all devils and godless folk should rage at him.' As a 'true theologus,' he boasted that he had preserved the churches and schools of the duchy from the poison of the Sacramentarians and the Flacians, and had taken good care that not a single Calvinist from Wittenberg should ruin the people. While the 'philosopher's stone' in spite of all their efforts still refused to reveal itself, Sömmering and his collaborators tried to keep the impatient Duke contented with other magic acts. He manufactured 'constellation' musket barrels, not one single shot from which could fail; he bought the Duke a 'lucky hat,' and searched for the herb *thalictron*, which conferred understanding and wisdom. He also set to work to discover the mercurial herb which, when quicksilver was poured over it, exuded a wonderful gold-coloured sap. Once, so he said, 'a he-goat with its beard cut off had stood outside the door; his chin was

wetted with mercurial water and a golden beard had grown.' To procure this herb a special messenger was sent to Dux in Bohemia, and a ducal ambassador who was journeying to the imperial court was instructed to find out this rare plant. Further, Sömmering at the Duke's wish took great trouble to concoct magic pearls, and he also used a corrosive stone to prevent the invasion of water in the salt works: this stone, it was said, would eat a channel through the rock and let the water out. He also concerted with the Duke as to whether, by poisoning the meadows with arsenic and metallic smoke, they could not curb the insolence of the refractory town of Brunswick. As a preservative from sore throat and gout he presented the Duke with a toadstone which had been taken out of the head of a snake, and which was worth 100 thalers; against the plague ' he supplied him with a preparation of lizard, the most poisonous of reptiles, which feed only on falling stars and sulphurous matter. Frau Anna soon got the Duke completely into her net, so that his formerly happy relations with his wife, the Duchess Hedwig, were for years long completely shattered. It was in vain that his sister, the Margravine of Küstrin, warned him that Sömmering was a runaway parson who had left his lawful wife and joined himself to Ziegler, and that he was misleading and blinding him (Duke Julius), and estranging him from all the gentlemen of his court and all his friends. Anna Ziegler, his sister told him, had been an immoral woman for twenty years: she had heard many strange tales of all her doings and how she was notorious with Electors and Princes all over the empire. Everyone knew how poor they were when they came to Wolfenbüttel, and now they dressed in silk and velvet; the Duke

was not thought well of by all worthy, honourable people.' In an 'account of Anna Zieglerin' sent to the Duke by a faithful subject, all the different arts by which this woman, in conjunction with Sömmering, was befooling him were enumerated. Amongst other things the writer said: 'They make out to my lord that Theophrastus Paracelsus had a son by the Duchess of Öttingen, and that this son, with the knowledge and willing consent of the Count, had become her husband. His name was Carolus, and he excelled Theophrastus Paracelsus and all the philosophers that have ever lived on earth. He was a great cabalistic philosopher, and, in short, in all his deeds and works equal to God, except that he lacked immortality. He alone in riches, wisdom, and understanding surpassed all emperors, kings, and princes in the whole world. He could make and transform all metals into real, solid gold; could do whatever he willed; could go hither and thither and become invisible when he liked; he knew all that had ever happened and all that was to come; nothing was impossible to him, nothing hidden from him. The name and title that he bears is Carolus, Count of Öttingen, Lord of Hohenschwan and Lower Bavaria. This man had married Anna Zieglerin because she was so pure and chaste, so far above other women and like unto the angels. If he could only get her away from Wolfenbüttel, and if the Duke and her husband, Henry Schombach, would let her follow him, he would give her husband his sister with 20,000 Nd. He would hold the Duke in eternal friendship and present him with the philosopher's stone. With Anna Zieglerin the Count would inaugurate a new world, and in the course of a few years bring forth countless numbers of children who would never suffer from illness and

would live on for 300, 400 or 600 years like our ancestors at the beginning of the world.' 'Anna Zieglerin was the only vessel of honour and pure instrument through which this could be brought about.' The Duke believed all these tales, and gave large sums of money to this 'Count' in order to secure and retain his friendship; he even offered the 'Count' his daughter in marriage; the 'Count,' however, refused her, for 'he only wished to marry Anna Maria Zieglerin, the altogether purest and chastest woman on this earth, in order that he might spend his life with her and carry out his project.' Frau Anna also pretended to be a 'star-reader. She knew all about the heavenly constellations, and regulated the Duke's dress according to stars; without her knowledge he must undertake nothing, must neither travel, nor engage a servant, nor make any plans. The Wh—— tells the Duke all sorts of devilish and impossible things and bewitches him so that he believes them all, and carries out her wishes. Again and again the Duke has said that when his wife dies he shall marry Frau Anna; when he mentions her name he uncovers his head with the greatest reverence; he says out plainly that she is a special creation of God, a woman full of all chastity, divine gifts, high understanding, and that there is none living or dead who has ever equalled her in virtue. How Satan does befool great people!' 'Because the Duke,' this account goes on to say, 'has sworn an oath to this Wh—— and this scoundrel that he will protect and befriend them, their vices and evil deeds never come to light, and are never brought before the magistrates, but the Duke carries on a secret game with them. The Wh—— and the parson persuade him not to trust his councillors and nobles, who, they say, are not true to

him. They provide him with other councillors who are in league with themselves, and so change the government of the court, filling it with their own people. What will be the end of all this it is too early yet to say. In short, the Wh—— and the parson have at present the control of the Duke in their own hands.'

Gradually, however, various fraudulent proceedings came to light, and Sömmering, Frau Anna, and their collaborators no longer felt themselves safe at court. In 1574, when the Duke was on a visit at Berlin with his son-in-law, the Elector of Brandenburg, they formed a plan to put to death the hated Duchess, and then to carry off all that they could collect together and take themselves out of the country. The crime was not perpetrated, but the plan became known to the Duke. Other treacheries also were discovered. Sömmering, by means of duplicate keys, had got access to the Duke's correspondence and copied out a number of his most important papers, amongst others draughts of a scheme for overturning the constitution of the empire; he had hoped to make use of these papers for his own advantage at the court of the Saxon Electorate with which the Duke was constantly at strife. The criminals escaped, were, however, arrested, put in chains and subjected to the strictest examination. Sömmering, while in prison, attempted to commit suicide. He declares that on his calling out, 'Christ, if thou wilt not help me send a devil to help me,' a devil stood before him in the shape of an executioner, wearing a grey hat, and told him he could not take him away because there were cross-bars to the window, but gave him a knife and told him to stab himself; he tried to do so, but the knife would not go through his body. Before his imprisonment he had made the

Duke believe in the great services he had rendered the Church, in the irreproachableness of his conduct and in his former ministry in the Church. Now he was completely unmasked. 'We have discovered in these people,' Julius wrote to the Elector of Brandenburg, 'so much roguery and villainy that your Grace will scarcely believe it all; we have indeed cause for thankfulness to God that by His mercy the diabolical plot against our dearest and most beloved wife and other electoral and princely persons was not carried out.' On February 7, 1575, the penal sentence was executed. Sömmering, Schombach, and Schulfermann were hanged and quartered, and Frau Anna was burnt in an iron chair; the court preacher Hahne was later on put to death by the sword.

But all the unfortunate experiences which the Duke had with the alchemists did not deter his successor, Henry Julius, from pursuing the search after the philosopher's stone with the help of 'fire-philosophers.'[1]

[1] A. Rhamm, 'Die betrüglichen Laboranten am Hofe des Herzogs Julius von Braunschweig,' in the *Feuilleton der Magdeburgischen Zeitung* (1882), Nos. 565–573. A. Beckmann, 'Therocyclus in Wolfenbüttel, 1568–1575,' in the *Zeitschr. für deutsche Kulturgesch.* Jahrg. 1857, pp. 551–565. Algermann's 'Bericht in v. Strombeck,' *Feier des Gedächtnisses*, 200–203. Kopp, i. 125. ** See also A. Rhamm, 'Die betrüglichen Goldmacher am Hofe des Herzogs Julius von Braunschweig, nach den Prozessakten dargestellt' (Wolfenbüttel, 1885). From the documents here used it comes out that Algermann cannot fully be trusted as a safe voucher. Cf. p. 109, n. 142. The first person who detected Frau Anna as an impostor was the Duchess Hedwig. Only a few months after her arrival at Wolfenbüttel Ziegler complained to the Duke that his august lady had poured the vials of her wrath upon her, and a little while later she complained again that the Duchess was very hostile towards her; she was willing to bear her cross, she said, but it hurt her very much to be thus misunderstood by so virtuous a lady, and as she had come to know her Princely Grace's penchant for the pure gospel she sent her as a present Martin Luther's books, praying that the Holy Ghost would enlighten the

'What proves a failure the first, the tenth, or even the ninety-ninth time, may well be a great success the hundredth time,' so spoke men of learned repute; and John Pontanus, Professor of the Healing Art at the university of Jena, and later at Königsberg († 1572), said that it was not till after 200 unsuccessful attempts that he had at last acquired mastery in the art of gold-making.[1] No wonder then that the princes, though their money frequently disappeared in smoke, were always ready to try their luck afresh, and strove to discover all possible secrets in order to become rich, and to behold many marvels.

In the South of Germany one of these dauntless princes was Duke Frederick of Würtemberg. In 1596 there appeared at his court the mighty gold-maker George Honauer, from Olmütz in Moravia, who through his fraudulent practices had gained such renown among the people, that he finally gave himself out as a baron and called himself George Honauer, Herr zu Brumhofen und Grobenschütz, was on familiar terms with counts and barons, frequently had 70 or 80 horses in his stables, and kept his own equerry. In order to teach his art to the Duke he asked for and obtained 36 cwts. 18 lbs. of Mömpelgard iron, besides a sum of gold, but after he had, as he said, used up 600,000 gulden, after three months he took himself off secretly and robbed the Duke still further of a quantity of money, jewels, and other things. Whilst he was being pursued the Duke had a gallows-tree made out of the iron which he had given him

pious Princess, so that she might be led to give up her unjust suspicions! But the Duchess's mistrust of the adventuress was not to be overcome: *l.c.* 21; cf. 76. See also Sudhoff, 'Geheimwissenschaften,' in the *Allgem. Ztg.* (1895), Beil. 219.

[1] Kopp, i. 224.

before. It was painted bright red and was eighteen feet high. On the top of it was placed another gallows like a weathercock, which could be turned round by the wind. After the adventurer had been caught in Oldenburg and brought back to Stuttgart, chained in a cart, the Duke had him dressed in a coat of gold tinsel, with hat, shoes, and feathers to match, and suspended to the weathercock. 'On the lower four quarters of the gallows he had four chains made to hang the four foremen of the mine who were to have aided and abetted Honauer in his trickery. His equerry was also hung, but from a separate gallows made of wood. A "rare, unheard-of broadsheet" made the event known to the German people.'[1] On the Duke, however, the episode made no impression.

The following year Frederick made a contract with another gold-maker from Zurich, who promised him, out of a mark of silver, to make at least $3\frac{1}{2}$ ounces of genuine gold, and also promised to teach the Duke his art. He was paid forthwith 10,000 gulden, and made several experiments which proved successful because his brother secretly threw gold into the saucepan. However, his imposture was finally discovered, the tincture which he had given the Duke was found to be false, and he, too, without trial and sentence, ended his days on the gallows. The same fate befell a third alchemist, the Italian Peter Montanus.[2]

[1] Account in Pfaff, *Miscellen*, 70 ff. Scheible, *Schaltjahr*, i. 45–50; see our remarks, vol. xii. 292 ff. ** See also E. Otto, 'Alchimisten und Goldmacher an deutschen Fürstenhöfen,' in the *Zeitschr. für Kulturgesch.* (year 1899), p. 49 ff., where a partly different account is given. See also *Český časopis historický* (1895), p. 272 ff. Tobolka, *Georg Honauer aus Olmütz, ein Alchimist am württemberg. Hof.*

[2] Account in Pfaff, *Miscellen*, 74–80.

In November 1595, Martin Crusius, Professor of Philosophy at the university of Tübingen, wrote in his diary, and from prudence wrote it in Greek: 'From George Weyganmeyer, Hebrew professor, I have heard the following: In Stuttgart there are two Jews, one from Ferrara who is called Abraham, and the other a German. Abraham makes gold, changes water into wine and stone into bread. The Jew says that these things are not magic, but taken out of the Jewish Cabbala. The best of the court people are not well pleased. But everybody keeps silence concerning these matters. Good Lord, what will be the end of it!'[1] But the court preacher Lucas Osiander did not keep silence. In 1598 he spoke seriously to the Duke about his patronage of the Italian Jew, against whose gold-making he had already before warned him. This Jew, he told the Duke, was a magician and he had brought other Jews addicted to magic into the country; but magicians were associates of the devil, and those who encouraged them would share in their alienation from God. The Duke, angry at this admonition, told his court preacher and prelate that he was a disreputable, good-for-nothing parson, a slanderer, a liar, and a child of the devil; the Jew had substantial proofs concerning very skilful and wonderful matters; in especial he possessed an unknown excellent concoction of saltpetre and powder with which the arsenals of the country were going to be supplied.[2]

Frederick established a number of alchemists, maintained at his own expense, in the little town of

[1] Weyermann, *Neue Nachrichten*, 603.

[2] Correspondence in Moser, *Patriotisches Archiv*, ix. 257–273.

Gross-Sachsenheim, regardless of the protests of the Provincial Estates who, in 1599, begged that he would not have 'so much to do with such swindlers, through whom he might suffer great injury.'[1] In the years 1605 and 1606 he again let himself be imposed on by several alchemists. The gold-maker John Henry Müller, a former journeyman barber, who had been raised to the nobility by the Emperor Rudolf II. as a reward for his skill, and had since called himself von Müllenfells, before coming to Stuttgart had already robbed many other princes—amongst them the Margrave Joachim Ernest of Ansbach and the Elector Frederick IV. of the Palatinate—of incredibly large sums; he carried on business also with Frederick, till by order of the latter in 1607 he was hanged on the gallows.[2] When Frederick's successor, John Frederick, overwhelmed with debts, applied for help to the Provincial Estates the latter signified to him that 'if he would rid the land of the alchemists, a whole company of whom had long been firmly established in Gross-Sachsenheim, the resources of his treasury might soon pick up again.'[3]

In Munich also, according to the report of Philip Hainhofer, there was a laboratory or distilling-house in which gold was made.[4] At the court there, a runaway monk from Cyprus disported himself under the assumed name of Count Marco Bragadino; he had come to Germany in 1588 and won great admiration in Vienna through his art of gold-making. Two black bulldogs

[1] Sattler, v. 230; cf. Kopp, i. 126.

[2] *Zeitschr. für die Gesch. des Oberrheins*, xxvi. 468–470. Adelung, vi. 90–105.

[3] Sattler, vi. 51.

[4] Häutle, 129.

which always accompanied him he declared to be his 'mediums' for bringing about magic results. With the help of the Jesuits he was exposed as an impostor, and, with two of his associates, hanged in a cloak covered with gold tinsel.[1] 'Alchemy and the art of making gold and silver out of a substance which is not gold or silver,' it says in a public edict of Duke Maximilian, 'ought to be utterly forbidden, because these arts are seldom practised without magic and superstition and suchlike devil's work. Transgressors of this order should either be punished with a definite fine, or in default of this, by imprisonment, banishment, or in some other recognised legal manner.'[2]

At Innsbruck, at the court of Archduke Ferdinand II. of Tyrol, wonderful things were related of Saxon alchemists 'who made copper out of iron, and gold out of copper, and every week produced 100 marks, from which the Elector derived great profit.' Experiments were also made there. Ferdinand II. had his own chemical kitchen and was in frequent intercourse with alchemists. The gold-maker Gabriel von Mayrwisen asked him in 1591 to send him a confidential man and said he would give him a few millions of gulden. Two years later Hans Jäger of Imst informed the Duke that he and others of his trade had entered into an agreement by which each one of them was bound to make known all their secrets to the others; one of them, however, who had had the good fortune to discover the philosopher's stone, would not reveal the secret to his associates. Hans Jäger begged Ferdinand

[1] Juvencius, *Hist. Soc. Jesu pars*, v. 388. Kopp, i. 174.
[2] *Zeitschr. für deutsche Kulturgesch.* (year 1873), p. 102.

to give him a letter of recommendation to the Emperor Rudolf in order that he might obtain authority from the latter to compel this recreant member to keep to his obligations.[1]

Rudolf II. was universally regarded as the chief protector of the travelling alchemists from all the countries of Europe, and the Court of Prague was indeed 'the veritable Mecca' of all the countless practitioners who occupied themselves with magic, exorcism, chiromancy, astrology, manufacturing magic mirrors, and so forth. The Emperor always kept at least twenty alchemists at work to test all the different methods proposed for transmuting metal. On many of these 'artists' he conferred nobility, and he spent incredibly large sums on them. His court alchemist, John Dee, son of a London wine-dealer, on the strength of royal patronage, lived in such magnificence that he actually refused a post offered him by the Czar Feodor, through the recommendation of English merchants, which would have meant a yearly salary of £2000 sterling, besides entire board and residence at court. The English gold-maker and magician Edward Kelley, an apothecary, was raised by Rudolf to the dignity of a knight and loaded with good fortune; the Polish impostor Michael Sendiwoj was made court councillor and so richly remunerated that he was not only able to buy himself a house, but also two large landed properties. 'How much gold Rudolf's chemical kitchens swallowed up,' says a report, 'it is impossible to calculate'; the number of his alchemists amounted, during the course of his long reign, to 200; 'and down to his last years he never for a moment

[1] Hirn, i. 364–365.

gave up the hope that he should succeed in manufacturing gold.' At the same 'time there was at court such a scarcity of ready money,' that once, as the Bavarian ambassador Joachim von Donnersberg, in July 1610, wrote to Munich, 'the caterer from the court kitchen, who had only one gulden in his purse and was applying at the treasury for further imbursements, was dismissed with the words, "he must make the gulden go as far as he could, for at present there was nothing to hand."'[1] In a 'Diskurs über Reformation des Kammerwesens,' addressed to the Emperor Matthias in 1616, the court treasury director, Christopher Siegfried von Breuner, estimated the debts left by Rudolf II. at 30,000,000 gulden.[2]

'To the pleasures and recreations of all sorts which the princes indulged in, and which cost the country very dear, there belonged also,' so men of insight complained at the time, 'the frequent visits and journeys to baths, and the meetings and gatherings of all sorts, which indeed were in some measure necessary, as when imperial and other Diets were visited, but which should not be accompanied with such magnificence and endless retinues, and inordinate number of horses, amounting often to many hundreds, or even many thousands.'[3]

[1] J. Svatek, *Kulturhistorische Bilder aus Böhmen*, 44 ff., 64–86. Schmieder, 300–308. Kopp, i. 194–197.

[2] Hurter, iii. 75.

[3] ** The craze for travelling increased more and more in the sixteenth century. It was already then the custom to educate young people by foreign travel. The grand 'Cavaliertour' comprised almost always the Netherlands, England, France and Italy. Steinhausen, *Gesch. des deutschen Briefes*, ii. 6, where it is pointed out how extraordinarily fast foreign influence worked on individuals through travelling. Concerning the effects of the craze for travelling in those days, Steinhausen, ii. 8, says :

At the Diet of Worms in 1521, the Landgrave Philip of Hesse appeared with 600 attendants; the Elector Frederick of Saxony brought 400 horses to Spires in 1544. In 1562 the Elector Augustus of Saxony, with his wife and a few princes who accompanied him, went to the Diet at Augsburg with 800 horses, and in 1582 with 1146 horses, among which was a bodyguard of 700 riders. The retinue of Duke Ulrich of Mecklenburg-Schwerin at this last Diet consisted of 112 persons, 150 carriage-horses, and about 70 outriders; the journey, calculated at 97 miles, was spread over 35 days; the expenses of the journey and of residence in Augsburg amounted to more than 20,000 thalers.[1] Joachim II. of Brandenburg at the Election Diet of the Emperor Maximilian II. (1562) had a suite of 68 counts and lords, with 452 horses and a number of servants, although the electoral coffers were almost empty and money was nowhere forthcoming, so that the Master of the Exchequer, Thomas Matthias, in Frankfort, had to maintain the court on his own capital and credit.[2] When the Elector Augustus of Saxony went in 1584 to take the baths at Schwalbach he had a bodyguard of 16 riders, and such an extensive suite that he required 200 more horses, and 24 for kitchen and cellar wagons. The day's marches were so short, that in eighteen days, and

'We must not be blind to the good influences of this custom, but still it must be said that the bad influences were stronger, and under the many bad ones, the contempt for the mother tongue engendered by travelling was the worst, and it was also the one most animadverted on by the preachers of the day.' See p. 19.

[1] Kius, *Ernestinische Finanzen*, 6-7. Lisch, *Jahrbücher*, ix. 174–176, 185, 199, 210.

[2] Moehsen, 474 note, 479–480.

at immense cost, he scarcely reached his destination.[1] Archbishop Wolf Dietrich von Salzburg in 1591 visited the Gastein baths with a court retinue of 240 persons and 139 horses.[2] The Landgrave Maurice of Hesse, on a journey to Berlin, took an escort of 3000 horse.[3] At a Diet held at Naumburg in 1614 for the renewal of the hereditary alliance between the Electorates of Saxony and Brandenburg, and Hesse, the escort of the Elector John George I. consisted of 546 riding horses, 196 carriage horses, 23 asses of burden; that of his brother Augustus was 116 persons, 121 riding and carriage horses; that of the Elector John Sigismund of Brandenburg, 488 persons, 124 riding and 363 carriage horses.[4] The wedding journey of the Elector Palatine

[1] v. Weber, *Aus vier Jahrhunderten*, ii. 21–27. On the way, at Marburg and at Mayence, there were 'good, strong drinking-bouts.' v. Bezold, ii. 229, n. 2.

[2] Vulpius, ix. 422. ** When the Bamberg Bishop Ernest of Mengerstorf, in 1588, prepared for a journey to Carinthia, 78 horses were ordered for the bishop and the higher servants. Twenty court squires, nine chamber valets, the episcopal house physician, two doctors of law, the court chaplain, three canons, one dean, the episcopal pay-master, two couriers, two trumpeters, and one barber made up the retinue. *Beiträge zur Kunde Steiermärkischer Geschichtsquellen* (1891), xxiii. 23.

[3] Bucholtz, *Versuch*, iii. 479 note. ** The luxury which Frederick of Würtemberg displayed on his entry into Ratisbon on June 28, 1594, seems, (according to the account of the Palatine church councillor, Dr. Markus zum Lamm [born 1544, died 1606], *Thesaurus picturarum, Einzüge*, fol. 94,) actually to have excited the displeasure of the Emperor. He made his entry with 650 outriders, amongst whom were eight counts, four barons, and over 100 nobles, and with such pomp, splendour, and show as no Elector, not even a Prince, at that time ever displayed, yea, verily, he was grander and more magnificent than the Emperor himself, as far as the people and the retinue he had with him go; for they were all dressed most superbly in velvet and silk overlaid with gold, and hung about with thick gold chains; then the luxury of the fifty Burgundian arquebussiers on foot, and so forth. Steinhausen, *Zeitschr. für Kulturgesch.*, vi. (Weimar, 1899), 49.

[4] Müller, *Annales*, 276–279.

Frederick V. in 1613, when with an escort of 191 persons he went to London for his espousals with the English King James I.'s daughter, cost the electorate, burdened with expenses of all sorts, £100,000 sterling.[1]

'Inordinate oppression, debts and poverty,' were the subject of universal complaint in almost all German territories. 'Can you point me to a single land in the empire,' asked a preacher in 1562, 'where wars, ravages, and high prices, taxes and socages, and everything in the nature of imposts is not constantly increasing owing to the pomp, extravagance, dissipation, craze for building of the princes, the bad management, and fraudulence of the councillors and officials, and excessive gratuities to those who do not deserve them?'

In Saxony the Elector Maurice had been able to prevail on his Estates to take over 600,000 gulden of the debts of the territorial prince.[2] Then when in 1553 the Elector Augustus succeeded to the government he found a load of debts of 1,667,078 gulden; ten years later the amount exceeded 2,000,000, and yet in between, so Augustus reckoned in 1563, the taxes on drink had brought him in 1,900,000 gulden, and his exchequers and mines had brought him 4,382,583 gulden. 'Where it has all gone to,' he said, 'God only knows.' He made up his mind that henceforth he would look after his affairs better, or else 'our Lord God will be angry, and I shall not be in good repute with many people.'[3]

He increased the revenues of his domains, extended the mine regalia over the whole country, and endeavoured

[1] Häusser, 274; see our remarks, vol. x. 516.

[2] Kius, *Ernestinische Finanzen*, 3.

[3] v. Weber's *Archiv für sächsische Gesch.*, vii. 220–221.

as far as possible to establish princely supremacy over the whole industry of the country. In order to convert the iron and salt works, which had hitherto been carried on to the account of the Treasury, into a government monopoly, he forbade the import of foreign iron and salt, and endeavoured to raise the price of both these commodities as much as possible by means of legal coercion.[1] As with the chase, so too with fishing, everything was to be electoral property. In 1568 he issued a command that on the banks of all ponds and streams, at intervals of a thousand ells, a gallows should be erected, and that anyone caught fishing there should without mercy be hanged on the nearest gallows. In 1572 'some defiant criminals who had been guilty of fishing' were punished by the gallows.[2] The country was taxed more and more heavily. To the repeated prayer of the Provincial Estates that the Elector would reduce the expenses of his court, there came invariably the answer that 'the court and household had been curtailed in every direction.'[3] When in 1565 Augustus came forward with fresh demands, the Estates signified to him that 'the subjects were beggared by the quantity of aids and taxes, besides which the Meissen and copper mine circle had been burdened with a fresh coal-tax, and all the subjects were in such abject poverty that it was impossible to consent to another tax.' In April 1567 a meeting of a committee advised the Elector to remember that 'the last taxes due, in spite of every effort, could not be collected. Owing to continuous failure of crops and to high prices, most of the poor

[1] Falke in the *Zeitschr. für deutsche Kulturgesch.* (year 1873), p. 393.
[2] *Ibid. Kurfürst August*, 122.
[3] *Ibid. Steuerbewilligungen*, xxxi. 138, 151.

people had scarcely any bread for themselves and their children, and were obliged to beg for it from others.' The following year the knights and the towns of the Voigtland petitioned the Elector to be content with the drink-tax, and to let the land-tax (Schocksteuer) drop out, 'in consideration of the great distress and poverty of the people, who were reduced to eating saw-dust and clay, and many of whom were dying of hunger and obliged to leave their holdings.'[1] In 1579 Augustus arbitrarily burdened the corn trade with a fresh tax of six pfennig on every bushel that was bought. 'This tax,' the Estates complained in 1582, 'had brought poverty to its knees more than any other; the poor were praying as loud as ever they could pray that the Elector would in pity for their misery abolish the hated rates and the bushel tax at once.' Augustus granted the prayer, but only on condition that the land-tax on ground and soil, movable property and industry should be considerably raised: 150,000 florins were to be returned to him yearly.[2] The Elector had looked well after his personal interest; he left behind him on his death a treasure of several millions;[3] but the love of his fleeced and impoverished subjects he did not take with him to the grave.[4]

[1] Falke, *Steuerbewilligungen*, xxxi. 141, 144, 145. In a Torgau Chronicle it was related of the year 1580 that 'many people had been driven by poverty and hunger to eat the husks in the brewing-house.' Arnold, i. 792.

[2] Falke, *Steuerbewilligungen*, xxxi. 151–152; *Kurfürst August*, 287. Weisse, iv. 160–173.

[3] By Weisse, iv. 354, the treasure is actually estimated at seven million thalers.

[4] Archduke Ferdinand of Tyrol wrote thereon, on February 6, 1586: 'Sui enim subditi et potiores quidem ex nobilitate ipsi alias infensi sunt, prouti non multis abhinc annis plurimi insidias in ipsum struentes veneno etiam interimere conati, qui deinde detecto scelere ac fraude, extremo

Under his successors this treasure disappeared and the electoral debts became more and more considerable from year to year; the taxes and imposts also greater. 'The subjects,' wrote the court preacher Paul Jenisch, in 1591, 'are so denuded of all means, that they barely have life left them.'[1] 'Taxation, burdens, fresh tricks and dodges for getting money go on increasing,' said Nicholas Selnekker, 'but the devil takes it all away again, and yet the lords have no foreign enemy.'[2]

Duke William of Saxe-Weimar, who after the death of the Elector Christian I. († 1591) held the regency till 1601, during the minority of Christian II., was in all the affairs of the empire more deserving of honour and respect than any other prince of the century, but he was a prince 'who was nothing less than economical and a good manager.' Whereas the revenues from the different exchequers of his duchy ought to have given him a yearly sum of over 80,000 gulden, they sank, through bad management and fraudulent dealings of the demesne tenants, to 30,000 gulden, which could not be paid by the occupiers but only by borrowed money. The chancellor and the councillors in 1590 admonished the Duke as follows: 'Your Princely Grace constantly spends large sums of money on horses: we reckon that every young horse costs 300 thalers, and most of them die before they can be ridden or used; also your Grace might well desist from superfluous festivities, journeyings to and fro, banquets and such like, for by these things the treasury is drained.' On the whole the

supplicio affecti sunt.' v. Bezold, ii. 344. The Venetian ambassador Zane wrote on March 4, 1586, to the Doge that Augustus had died 'con poco sentimento delli suditi [a gap: i quali ?] furono sempre oltragiati durante la sua vita e della prima moglie, sorella del re di Danemarcea.' v. Bezold, ii. 353.

[1] *Annales Annaberg.*, 45. [2] *Auslegung des CI Psalms*, 360.

Duke within the last three years ' was over three tons of gold to the bad.' 'The latest accounts show that this summer's revenue from land- and drink-taxes, is 50,000 gulden below the expenses, and it is presumable that after Michaelmas things will not be any better, but that the deficit will be greater. If every year we have either to make good a ton of gold or else be in debt, your Grace must in the end be ruined, for the whole of your ordinary revenue would not suffice to pay the interest of that sum. If, then, the poor country people are fleeced and drained by taxes, you will have to reckon with God's heavy punishment and displeasure, which will fall on master and man. It is uncertain, moreover, whether the money can be obtained from the people. And even if they were willing to give it they are no longer able to do so. If the poor are oppressed with hunting-dues, building-taxes, service money, double drink-taxes, it will be giving God cause to pour out His wrath more heavily upon us. This evil dilemma, however, can be got over with one word, that is, parsimony, economy, good management, first and foremost in the personal expenses of the prince, and in the whole court life.' [1]

In the Electorate in 1601, the Estates, notwithstanding that they were well acquainted with the miserable, penniless condition of the people, had consented to the land-tax being raised by half its former amount. They did, however, maintain intact the regulation that the game preserves and hunting grounds were not to be further multiplied. Then when in 1605 Christian II. again exacted higher taxes, the

[1] Moser, *Patriotisches Archiv*, iii. 275–288. Kius, *Ernestinische Finanzen*, xxvi. 133–134.

theologian Polycarpus Leiser spoke in favour of the government in a sermon preached during the provincial session of the Diet. 'The high and mighty rulers,' he said, 'were the eyes of the whole country. If there was anything wrong with our eyes we did not peer into them and poke at them overmuch, but we covered them with a clean green shade and did what else we could to stop the flow of matter; thus it was that subjects must cover up the defects of their rulers and imitate pious obedient children, who willingly do that which they see written in their parents' eyes; they do not go on disputing about it, but feel sure that their parents have good and sufficient reasons for what they command.'[1] The Estates, however, represented to the Elector that 'the earlier documentary assurance had not been fulfilled, but that, on the contrary, game had everywhere been multiplied, new preserves had been made and old ones extended, and everywhere the hunting and forest officials encroached in the most arbitrary manner on the jurisdiction and rights of the individual.' In return for a fresh assurance that these grievances should be at once and finally abolished, the land-tax was raised by one-third, and the drink-tax was doubled. On every barrel forty groschen had now to be paid instead of twenty, or indeed of ten before the year 1555. Besides which a special tax of five groschen was to be paid on every bucket of wine till the year 1611. Nevertheless in 1609 the Elector's debts had again mounted up to such an extent that he did not know how to get out of his difficulties without the help of the Estates. The Estates, he said, must furnish enough ready money to pay the expenses of the court for two years to come.

[1] *Landtagspredigt*, 35, 39.

The councillors, however, warned him against summoning a Diet, for he would then be required to give an account of how it had come about that since the last Diet, in spite of the heightened taxes, the treasury debts had risen so much. They reminded the Elector emphatically that in the years 1601 and 1605 a larger sum had been granted than ever before, even in times when the whole country had been in danger from warlike enemies. This had so drained the land that the justices in the country and the councillors in the towns had been obliged to use great pressure in order to get the taxes that were due from the poor people. 'If the Provincial Estates were to learn that the Elector had not only granted considerable sums to subjects of his own, but also to numbers of foreigners, whereby, in addition to large payments to jewellers and merchants he had heaped debts on the treasury, intending to refer these again to the Diet, they (the Estates) would be hard to move as regards raising further taxes.' Regardless of this admonition, the Elector called his Estates together and demanded that 'the faithful subjects' should not only go on paying the already existing taxes for nine years more, but also that the tax on drink should again be materially increased. This time, however, the Estates seemed bent on refusing any more taxation, for 'everywhere there was nothing but ruin and retrogression in everything'; nevertheless, after lengthy negotiations, another increase of the land-tax was sanctioned under the solemn promise from the Elector that 'he would incur no more debts in future and would not draw any more on the treasury without the consent of the Estates.' But, notwithstanding this promise, on his death, in 1611, his debts were found

to have again seriously increased.[1] The court maintenance at Dresden at that time swallowed up half of the revenues from all the exchequers in the Electorate.[2] The court preachers, Michael Niederstetter and Paul Jenisch, in their funeral sermons on the Elector, pointed out plainly enough 'the oppression and burdens of all sorts which had been tolerably hard and sour to the poor people, especially in the heavy and dear times when it was a hard matter to get even their daily bread.' The Elector, so Jenisch opined, had wished to avoid all injustice and oppression of the poor, and all financing and wrong-doing, if only there had not been people who thrust themselves in and made it impossible for him to carry out his wishes.'[3]

In other principalities the condition of things was no better.

Duke Ernest II. of Lüneburg spent about double his revenue on the court and the government. In the year 1600–1601 these revenues amounted to 37,000 gulden, the next year to 35,000 gulden, while the expenditure in these two years came to 122,000 gulden; he bequeathed to the little principality debts to the amount of 527,000 gulden.[4]

At the court of Duke Francis I. of Lauenburg the expenditure reached such a height that in 1567, when the youngest daughter was to be married to Duke

[1] Falke, *Steuerbewilligungen*, xxxi. 170 ff.; and Falke, 'Verhandlungen Christians II. mit seinen Landständen, 1601–1609,' in the *Zeitschr. für deutsche Kulturgesch.* (year 1873), pp. 80–91. Weisse, iv. 356. Weck, 445.

[2] Müller, *Forschungen*, i. 199–206, 209–212.

[3] *Drei christliche Predigten* (the first sermon at Bl. $D^2$., the second at Bl. $D^4$.

[4] Havemann, ii. 521–522.

Wenceslaus of Teschen, there was no money to pay for her outfit. 'Our brother Duke Francis and his Grace's wife,' Queen Dorothy of Denmark, on September 9 of the said year, informed the Electress of Saxony, 'have written to us to ask us to help them to get clothes for their daughter, who is to have the Duke of Silesia. We have answered that they, as the parents, must find the way out of the difficulty, and that it would be better for them to spare the poor child some of their own money, which will otherwise only be lost or badly used. But we know well that no admonition is of any use. Our brother goes on in the same way and squanders all he can lay hands on, and his children are now growing up, so that indeed there is need for good counsel as to how things are to be really mended. Herewith we send your Grace eighteen ells of "Blyandt" to give the young lady from us, and to make her a full dress; we feared that if we sent the stuff to the parents it might not reach the young lady.'[1]

In Pomerania also, 'through the pomp of the court and the pressure of unfavourable financial conditions' under John Frederick of Pomerania-Stettin (1569–1600), and Ernest Ludwig of Pomerania-Wolgast and his successors, the debts of both reigns rose in an unheard-of measure. The result for the country was an increased burden of taxation, fought over in continuous battles between the Duke and the Estates.[2]

[1] v. Weber, *Kurfürstin Anna*, 45–46.

[2] ** See Spahn, *Verfassungs- und Wirtschaftsgesch. des Herzogtums Pommern*, p. 176 ff. In order to diminish the load of debts, John Frederick, at Rügenwalde in 1571, and again at Wollin in 1575, was granted four more taxes to be paid the four next years at Martinmas. Notwithstanding that in 1580, after two years' pause, the Treptow Diet had sanctioned three fresh taxes, the Estates in 1585 were met with another pile of

In Mecklenburg the private property and the treasury funds of Duke John Albert (1547–1570), consisting chiefly of sequestered convent goods, were either pawned or in a state of ruin, and owing to bad management they brought in very little. In 1553 the debts of the country had risen to 900,000 gulden. 'The affairs of our state,' wrote the Duke in 1568, 'have been most wretched for many years; the reason is that our councillors are deceivers and liars.' Under the most crushing conditions he raised loans, but he was only able to pay interest to a few creditors, and to a very few servants their salaries; in foreign lands he was loudly reviled as a tardy paymaster.[1] When in 1571 at a Provincial Diet at Güstrow he asked for a fresh tax the nobles said: 'Fifteen or sixteen years ago the Estates, by taking over the debts of the country, had completely freed the princely houses and exchequers; by this proceeding and by other burdens, as well as by the dearness of the times, they had been entirely drained, and the poor peasants were impoverished and had nothing but dry bread to eat, while the territorial lords were sumptuously supplied with princely incomes.' To this they received the answer: 'The former oppressions had not been so injurious to the knights (the foremost of the Estates) as to the lesser classes; the lower and middle classes had been most especially impoverished: the knights must therefore now exert themselves and come to the rescue: other princes

debts of 136,666 gulden, which they took over entirely into their own management; in consequence of this the sum which they had undertaken to refund, within a period of fifteen years, out of taxes not required to meet the treasury debts, rose to 472,426 gulden (p. 156).

[1] Lisch, *Jährbücher*, viii. 84, 88 note; i. 114, and xxiii. 79–80.

had been as deeply involved in debts and had been freed by their Estates.' At a Provincial Diet in 1572 John Albert was present in person, and made known to the Estates that 'since their last assembly the princely debts had still further augmented; it was not a question of whether they were bound to give help: it was simply a question of how and by what means the money should be got together.' The Estates replied: 'The country had relied on the prince's written promise that the Estates, after they had this once taken the debts on themselves, should never again be troubled with further demands, and all classes from the highest to the lowest had exerted themselves to the utmost; now, however, they were completely drained out; the knights, who were supposed to be a free Estate, had levied money, corn and horses, and they must now come to the help of their poor impoverished peasants. How strenuously the towns and the peasants had exerted themselves might be seen from their ruined houses; many of them had already sold up, others would soon follow suit.' The towns said that 'it was patent to sight that their poverty and distress were extreme.' The delegates from Rostock said that their town was on the verge of ruin, already burdened with a debt of 400,000 gulden; 'the town of Güstrow complained especially of large debts and much poverty among the inhabitants; people who were credited with good means sent their children out in the dark to beg for bread from door to door.' This last complaint evoked the princely remark that 'Güstrow received good food from the court, the population was increasing, and several new buildings had been erected; its poverty came from the high prices, and other towns were as

badly off.[1] On the demand that the preachers also should contribute to paying off the ducal debts, the superintendent Conrad Becker, on June 30, 1572, addressed to the territorial princes a petition to the following effect: 'The abbeys and cloisters from which the poor preachers who have spent their patrimony in study, ought to receive support, are done away with; the preachers have to suffer hunger and want in their ministry; they have been obliged in these hard times to pawn or sell their books and their clothes, in order to buy bread for their children and save themselves from starvation; so that the preachers have nothing of their own; where then shall they get money to help the Duke?'[2] When the country towns were called upon in 1582 to provide coaches and horses for Duke Ulrich's journey to the Augsburg Diet, the prevailing poverty-stricken condition came out strongly: most of the towns complained of penury, distress and heavy loads of debts; many scarcely possessed horses enough for their farming operations; others had no money, 'only one coach,' and very few horses to send.[3] At a meeting of deputies at Wismar in 1610, Vicke von Strahlendorf said that he had attended Provincial Diets for forty years, and that they had always befriended the princes; in his lifetime at least 1,400,000 gulden had been raised by taxes, besides trust money which had been advanced; the grievances ought to have been redressed, but there had been no result at all.'[4] At the court of John VII. of Mecklenburg-Güstrow the debts became so enormous that in 1590

[1] Franck, *Altes und neues Mecklenburg*, Book x. 192–197, 219.
[2] Schirrmacher, ii. 292–294.
[3] Lisch, *Jahrbücher*, ix. 173.
[4] Franck, Book xii. 116.

the Duke told his Estates he could no longer hold out in his distressed condition and that he should leave the country. He ended by committing suicide. His widow was allowed two gulden a week for her own maintenance and the education of her children and thirty-three shillings a week for payment of servants; she lived on at Lübz in a tumble-down house, without beds and linen.[1]

Among the lands most deeply involved in debt was the Electorate of Brandenburg since the time of Joachim II. At the death of his father, Joachim I., in 1535, the finances of the Mark were found to be in good order, but already in 1540 the Estates were obliged to take over territorial debts to the amount of a million gulden; in 1542, 519,000 gulden were added to this sum, and in the following year not even the interest on the debts could be paid. 'The country,' wrote the councillor Eustachius von Schlieben to Joachim, 'has lost all faith in your Electoral Grace; securities are not to be obtained.' The Church goods were all squandered. Wherever he could the Elector took loans from his subjects, and thus found himself compelled, as security for the interest and arrears, not only to mortgage his treasury funds and tax revenues, but also to renounce important rights and privileges in favour of his creditors. Thus, for instance, in 1541 he made over the jurisdiction of the town of Tangermünde to the magistrates in return for a loan of 1000 gulden; that of Werden, with the income of the street taxes, for 800 gulden; and the jurisdiction of Neustadt-Eberswalde for 200 gulden. By the year 1549 there was not in the whole of the crown lands a single district in full possession of the Elector,

[1] Lesker, 73–74.

who acknowledged that he had been obliged to borrow money on 'unchristian and ruinous usury.' The new pile of debts amounted in the same year 1549 to $1\frac{3}{4}$ million, to which sum by 1564 there were added no less than 1,700,000 to 1,800,000 thalers; the land became completely bankrupt, as the Elector went on raising fresh loans at usurious interest; at his death in 1571 his debts amounted to more than $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions; in 1572 the country had to pay 3,689,980 thalers.[1] Towards the end of the century, said the Elector Joachim Frederick, the electoral lands were so greatly burdened with heavy debts that it was a difficult matter to pay even the interest on them, let alone the capital.[2]

In Brunswick, through over-sumptuousness of court state and all sorts of wanton expenditure, 'the tale of debts after the death of Duke Julius was most disastrous.' Julius, a good administrator, who had accumulated wealth especially by farming the mines, on his death in 1589 left his successor, Henry Julius, a treasure of nearly a million gulden. The new Duke, however, kept up great outward pomp, and a numerous staff of attendants most superbly apparelled, gave frequent costly banquets, displays of fireworks, masquerades, dressed his mercenary troops in uniforms of unheard-of costliness, and once in 1605 spent, on a single muster of these troops, the sum of 30,000 thalers. When he died in 1613, not only had his father's fortune entirely disappeared without any-

[1] Isaacsohn, 45 ff. Winter, *Märkische Stände*, xix. 550–554, and xx. 542–545. Kius, *Ernestinische Finanzen*, 4. See our remarks, vol. vi. p. 65 f.

[2] Köhler, xx. 255.

one's knowing what had become of the money, but there was also a debt of 1,200,000 thalers on the princely treasury; more than one nobleman had with the treasury an account of a whole ton of gold.[1] Under Duke Frederick Ulrich there followed a complete disruption of the whole State organisation; the Duke was in such a constant state of intoxication, that he could not easily pull himself together and collect his thoughts. His unworthy favourites, Anton and Joachim von Streithorst, and their associates kept him in a perpetual state of drunkenness and assumed entire dominion over the duchy. For the gratification of their luxurious extravagance they squandered first the treasury funds, and then the convent goods; they devastated the forests and farmed out the minting places, whereby the most inferior money became current; all prices rose enormously and foreign trade ceased almost entirely. All in vain did the widowed Duchess beseech her son in the most touching manner to look into his affairs and see whether all was well in the government, or whether 'the poor were not being fleeced and trodden down, ecclesiastical property tampered with, and the innocent oppressed.'[2] In spite of the universal poverty the Council of Hanover, on February 14, 1618, organised in honour of the Duke a 'Shrove-Tuesday festival,' the expenses of which amounted to nearly 5000 thalers.[3]

As in North Germany, so too in most of the southern districts, especially since the middle of the sixteenth

[1] Bodemann, *Herzog Julius*, 223. Spittler, *Geschichte Hannovers*, i. 331 ff., 365, 377, 382. Henke, *Calixtus*, i. 42. Havemann, ii. 504–507.

[2] Spittler, *Gesch. von Hannover*, i. 390 ff. Schlegel, ii. 377–378, 656–657. *Neues vaterländisches Archiv*, iv. 101–102.

[3] *Zeitschr. des Histor. Vereins für Niedersachsen* (year 1873), p. 24 note.

century, State organisation was in an anarchical condition.[1]

Concerning the Palatinate during the reign of the Elector Otto Henry († 1559), the Countess Palatine Maria, wife of the later Elector Frederick III., wrote to Albert of Prussia: 'When Otto Henry dies, we shall find a sum of debts twice as big as the whole revenue of our principality.'[2] In 1562 Frederick could not manage to meet his son-in-law, John Frederick of Saxony, in Thuringia for want of money. He could not, he said, 'pay for hotel accommodation on the journey.' 'With care and anxiety, early and late, I have to think and contrive how I shall be able to keep faith and promises at the forthcoming Frankfort Fair.'[3] Under Elector Frederick IV. the debts increased to such an amount that the Electoral Master of the Exchequer said in 1599 that the Treasury had lost all credit. All the same, the court household of the spendthrift Frederick IV. consumed yearly, amongst other articles, 400 hogsheads of wine, 2000 malters of corn, 2500 malters of spelt, 9000 malters of oats. Under his successor, Frederick V., the last resources of the land were exhausted by an expenditure surpassing all that had gone before, and the princely treasury was overwhelmed with debts.[4]

In the 'Aufzeichnungen einer fürstlichen Person'[5] of the end of the sixteenth or the beginning of the

[1] The unfavourable condition of the financial affairs of Ferdinand II. of Tyrol, especially after 1580, is exhaustively treated by Hirn, i. 644 ff.

[2] See our remarks, vol. xi. p. 131.

[3] Kluckhohn, *Briefe*, i. 328, 334; cf. 30.

[4] See our remarks, vol. ix. 213 f., vol. x. 516.

[5] Diary of a princely personage.

seventeenth century, the following remarks occur concerning the bankrupt state of the land: 'The houses are empty, money has flown, debts have increased, the subjects are so harassed and impoverished that they can neither work for us nor for their children: they have mortgaged their lands, disposed of many of their wagons and carts, their cows and sheep are in the hands of the usurers, &c., &c. Farms are neglected, dowries swallowed up, all rents are uncertain, many tithes are lost, dues and pensions are unpaid, the incomes have dwindled down. Great sums have been borrowed at usurious interest. In our distress we have so far been unable to stretch a helping hand to our poor subjects who day and night have to rush and run about for us—as is our duty. Wherewith shall we pay the servants and the poor people who daily murmur and sigh? How shall we save these people from hunger and rags, that they be no longer their neighbours' laughing-stock?'[1]

How manifold were the grievances and wrongs of the people under the insolvent princes is seen, for instance, from a promise made by the Margrave Edward Fortunatus of Baden to the Provincial Estates in 1589, that 'the burdens introduced under the Margrave Philip (1569–1588), such as salt money, socage money, oats money, burial money, fresh-food money, increased body and death dues, fresh wine taxes, fresh taxes on swine feeding in the woods, and all else that in these later times had been imposed, contrary to old tradition, should be abolished; but that the older taxes, and

[1] Contributed by v. Weech in the *Zeitschr. für die Gesch. des Oberrheins*, xxxvi. 166–169.

the salt monopoly, should remain in force until the existing debts were half or wholly paid off.' In 1582 the Provincial Estates had sanctioned an income-tax on both movable and immovable property, on capital and on loans, a tax of 8 batzen on every 100 guldens' worth; in 1585 they had raised this tax to 12 batzen; in 1588 they had taken over 300,000 gulden of the princely debts.[1] 'What the people suffered under Edward Fortunatus is beyond description.' Contemporaries who condemned the iniquities of princely life with due severity, pointed especially to the 'verily appalling and beyond all measure abominable life' of this Margrave, and asked: 'Where such a life could be led year after year, for years long in the holy empire, without any interference from the supreme authorities, and no cry of horror from all the princes, must not the condition of the State have been unspeakably foul and rotten?'[2] By drunkenness, by senseless expenditure, and by low excesses, Edward Fortunatus brought himself to such a state of poverty that he was driven at length to try and help himself up again by highway robbery and falsification of coin. 'He rode out with his servants on marauding expeditions,' says a trustworthy report of the year 1595, 'he hid in cornfields and sprang out to rob travellers without the least shame or compunction, he overturned merchants' conveyances and took from them whatever he could. He did all this freely and openly, had the plundered people bound up, counted out in their presence the money he had robbed them of, and divided it as he pleased among his robber

[1] v. Weech, 'Badische Landtagsabschiede,' in the *Zeitschr. für die Geschichte des Oberrheins*, xxix. 342, 354, 356, 359, 362–365.

[2] *Von den vielen Anzeichen*, see above p. 263, n. 1.

associates. Life even was sometimes taken on these occasions, as in the case of an Italian shopkeeper who was shot. With the things that he had taken from his victims the Margrave adorned his castle.' False coining he carried on with the help of a ruined Italian silk vendor, Francesco Muscatelli. This man, with a 'special metallic mixture' of his own invention, made Ferdinand thalers, debased thalers, and 'Portuguese' worth ten ducats, which were put in circulation at the Frankfort Fair. The Margrave used to be present himself when the coining was going on, and worked with his own hand the press procured from Augsburg. In order to get stamp-cutters he had recourse to coercion, and he considered all means allowable.' He did not even shrink from attempts at assassination. He had intended taking the life of one of his cousins, when he was a guest at his table, by means of a poisoned water concocted by Muscatelli. The crime was to be perpetrated when his cousin Margrave Ernest Frederick came to Ettlingen to see the representation of the 'Passion.' This poisonous water, of which a considerable quantity was found at Baden in the castle, took effect on members of people, as contemporary statements testify.' 'The Margrave Fortunatus also resorted to diabolical magical means for putting an end to the Margrave Ernest Frederick.' 'This was to be accomplished by means of a little image made especially for the purpose, representing the person of Ernest Frederick. For this evil work he intended to obtain the services of Paul Pestalozzi from the Grisons. 'He had taken an oath from this man and pledged himself with him to the act of villainy, and also, at the sacrifice of their souls and their salvation, they had bound themselves for all eternity to

Satan.'[1] 'The Margrave has sunk to such depths,' wrote Dr. Franz Born of Madrigal on January 28, 1595, to Duke William of Bavaria, 'that he consorts with the most wanton people, buffoons, bawds, freebooters, necromancers, false coiners and such like. And although he has had honourable chancellors and administrators, the most light-minded people have been employed in the administration of justice, people to whom no injustice was too great to be committed. Through all this the Margrave has come down to such depths of iniquity that he does not scruple openly to profane the Sacraments of Christ to horrible magic uses, as I heard complained of from the lips of one of his chaplains. He wanted to obtain the chaplain's help for the devilish consecration of a ring, a magnet stone, a bewitched book, a picture, in order to put an end to the Margrave Ernest Frederick.' 'So that in sinfulness against God he and his people have desecrated all the Holy Sacraments in a way which I would rather tell by word of mouth than put down in writing; they have openly invoked the devil and committed such sinful impieties that it would be no wonder if God were to destroy the whole land.' 'The Margrave's followers,' Franz Born goes on, 'also behaved most insolently and arrogantly in the towns, so that all over the country we were all as it were sitting on a volcano, and the poor people were in a constant agony of fear. And at last nobody received any payment, nobody had anything left, and not even the necessary wax and oil could be bought for the service of God.'[2]

[1] *Grundlicher, Wahrhafter und Bestendiger Bericht: Was sich zwischen dem Markgrafen Ernst Friedrich zu Baden, &c., und zwischen Markgraf Eduardi Fortunati Dienerschafft und ihm selbst verloffen, &c.* (1595). Cf. Vulpius, viii. 397–400; Häberlin, xix. 28–45.

[2] Vulpius, iii. 175, 176.

In the Margraviate of Ansbach-Bayreuth in 1557 the debts amounted to three times as much as the revenue. And yet in the same year the Margrave George Frederick formed the plan of erecting the new Plassenburg; he spent on this building a sum larger than the whole revenue of the land could refund in four years. In 1560 the debts of the small principality had risen to 2,500,000 gulden; the court household consisted at the time of nearly 200 persons. The taxes levied on the people were so unbearable that in 1594 the town questioned 'whether they would not be better off under the Turks?[1]

In Würtemberg in 1550, Duke Ulrich had left behind him debts to the amount of 1,600,000 gulden, which entailed payment of a yearly interest of 80,000 gulden. In 1554 the interest which Duke Christopher had to pay was calculated at more than 86,000 gulden.[2] The country in this year become responsible for the sum of 1,200,000 gulden, but after the lapse of eleven years the treasury debts had more than doubled.[3] In want of fresh taxes, Christopher wrote in 1564 to his councillors: 'Everybody knows what all the surrounding lands do for their lords and rulers to help pay off their debts. The imperial hereditary lands in Alsatia, Sundgau, Breisgau, Hochberg, Hagenau took over the whole sum of debts, and soon afterwards voted 300,000 gulden of ready money, and in addition to this levied a tax of one rapp on every measure of wine, which comes to one batzen for five measures. Bavaria some years ago levied a tax which brought in

[1] Voigt, 'Wilhelm von Grumbach,' in Von Raumer's *Histor. Taschenbuch*, vii. 163. Lang, iii. 19, 261, 277, 295. See our remarks, xi. p. 132.

[2] Kugler, i. 292.

[3] Reyscher, 17[b], lxx.

yearly over 200,000 gulden, and at the last Provincial Diet she took over the whole debts together with the charges thereon. The Palatinate gave the Elector over 600,000 gulden in two lots. The Margraviate of Baden has agreed to increase the rate of their existing imposts for fifteen years, and I am told, has even consented to new assessments. Hesse for sixteen years made over to its lord the "tax on drink" as they call it, which brings in 50,000 gulden a year, besides the other large grant which the Estates had before bestowed. Saxony and other countries acted in a similar manner.'[1] The councillors replied to the Duke in two memorandums: 'The court expenses' they said, 'must imperatively be reduced; they had gone on rising during his reign to such an extent that neither the Duke nor the impoverished country could any longer defray them. There must therefore be a thoroughgoing change and diminution "especially as regards buildings, provisions, paying other rulers' debts, wine parties and toasts, studs, tapestry, house-furniture, castellans, bears, lions, game, swans, peacocks, money loans, hunting-expenses, farm and kitchen service": the exhausted country, after all that it had already done, could not with any propriety be further appealed to.'[2] None the less, the country, in 1565, in spite of all the grants made since 1554, took over the sum of 1,200,000 gulden and pledged itself also to go on paying the interest of the sum.[3] After the death of Christopher in 1568, things became even worse under Dukes Ludwig, Frederick, and John Frederick. The land was yet to learn what 'extravagance really was.' The pleasure-house built by Duke Ludwig at Stuttgart cost three tons

[1] Kugler, ii. 582.
[2] *Ibid.*, 584.
[3] Reyscher, 17[b], lxx ff.

of gold.[1] In 1583 the Estates took over 600,000 gulden besides the interest.[2] But more and more debts continually followed. Duke Frederick was bent on emulating the splendour of the courts in Paris and in London which he had visited, and on his accession he brought French noblemen, financiers, and comedians into Würtemberg. After obtaining, in 1603, the honour so long sought by him in vain, of investiture with the Order of the Garter, he repeatedly sent deputations to London with costly presents on the occasions of the festivals of the Order, and he himself kept the festival annually with great magnificence. In 1605 the festivities at Stuttgart lasted eight whole days.[3] In 1599 the Estates had urgently implored him 'not to embark in any unnecessary expenses on court display and to curtail the superfluous outlay on salaries and amusements.' But that very year he had held a carnival at immense cost, with processions of all sorts, allegorical devices, tourneys, and costly fireworks which greatly enfeebled the resources of his treasury and of the church goods'; 'within six years,' the Estates complained, 'they had granted him sixteen tons of gold; his subjects could not pay any more taxes.'[4] In 1605 they complained again of the Duke's 'unseemly extravagance and luxury in all directions.' Frederick answered: 'Who spends all the money, if not the people themselves?' To the further complaint of the Estates that the staff of sick nurses ordered by Duke Ludwig had not been provided, they were answered: 'They had no need to trouble about that; it could not be done; he was not going to provide nurses.' When the Estates gave fuller details as to the

[1] Spittler, *Gesch. Wirtembergs*, 190.
[2] Reyscher, ii. 333.
[3] Pfaff, *Gesch. Wirtembergs*, ii[a]. 41-42.
[4] Sattler, v. 230.

districts in which tolls, taxes, dues, and socages had been raised, their statements were flatly denied: 'Nothing had been raised; whoever said so was not speaking the truth. The people often complained without cause.' The Duke did not deny that 'the Darmstadt district had been deprived of the hunting and preserving rights which it had enjoyed from time immemorial, and that in Wildbad, contrary to old tradition, a tax of one kreuzer had now to be paid on every trunk of wood, but he said: 'Peasants have no business to hunt; we have made fresh arrangements about forest management; let those who want wood give what is right and fair.' The complaints of the town and district of Brackenheim that the allowance of wine they used to have at harvest time was no longer given them, was dismissed with the answer: 'We have abolished superflous and incessant drinking, as is right and fitting; the people have got nothing to say on the subject.'[1] Only at his own court would Frederick consent to no curtailing, and the Estates were not to say a word to him, not to complain but simply to pay up, and levy fresh taxes.

In 1607 he obliged them to pay another princely debt of 1,100,000 gulden; had they not, they were told for their comfort, taken over 3,000,000 under the two last Dukes.[2] The following year, when Frederick died, the deficit amounted to nearly one and a half millions; the coffers were so exhausted that all disbursements had to be made with borrowed money.[3] This, however, did not hinder his successor, John Frederick,

[1] 'Complaints of the 25 January, 1605, and Resolutions of the Duke' in Moser, *Patriotisches Archiv*, i. 332–342.

[2] Sattler, v. 276. Spittler, *Gesch. Wirtembergs*, 220–221. Pfaff, *Gesch. Wirtembergs*, ii. 34–39.

[3] Pfaff, ii[a]. 54–55.

in 1609, on the occasion of his marriage with Barbara Sophia, daughter of the Elector Joachim Frederick of Brandenburg, from entertaining like a very Croesus.'[1] Duke Frederick's 'almighty minister,' Matthew Enzlin, after languishing in prison for several years, was executed in 1613 as an embezzler of public money and a traitor to his country.[2] However, 'the new councillors also helped to increase the confusion of financial matters. In vain did a committee of the Estates represent to the Duke in 1610 that 'experience showed that the greater part of the land, owing to excessive poverty, could not endure the heavy taxation imposed hitherto; also that the middle and well-to-do classes, who owned some thousand guldens' worth of property, had suffered so much from a succession of bad harvests, especially in the vineyards, that he would have to plunge further into debt in order to discharge his rents, interest, bounties and household expenses.'[3] The Duke went on with his extravagance, regardless of the complaints of the Estates concerning unnecessary court attendants, festivals, alchemists and musicians. By 1612, a fresh load of debts amounting to one million was accumulated; 'no one knew where all the money had gone.' Weary of the everlasting demands for money the Estates would no longer assemble.[4] The yearly deficits they had had to refund had amounted in 1583 to 141,000, in 1591 to 192,000, in 1607 to 200,000; in 1618 it had risen to 259,000.[5]

[1] See above p. 253 ff.

[2] 'The punishment assigned to him, that he was first to have his right hand cut off, and his head laid at his feet and then be stuck on a post, was remitted because he was a remarkable literatus, and had already been several years in prison.'—V. Hormayr, *Taschenbuch*, new series, xiii. 144.

[3] Sattler, vi. 43. [4] Spittler, *Gesch. Wirtembergs*, 223–230.

[5] Reyscher, 17ª, lxxix. In a MS. of the year 1600 we read: 'Three things are gaining the upper hand in Würtemberg: blasphemy of God,

In Bavaria also, as the Estates, especially under Dukes Albert V. and William V., justly complained at almost every Diet, the magnificence of court display was quite disproportionate to the revenue of the land. After the Estates in 1568 had granted 100,000 gulden for the costs of Duke William's wedding they were startled in 1570 by Albert's declaration that the sum was not sufficient; 'he had been obliged to borrow a further sum of 90,000 gulden, which the country must now pay; moreover, owing to expensive journeys, diets, multiplying councillors, diminution of receipts, great calls had been made on him, to meet which an increase of taxation would be necessary. The Estates pointed to the complete exhaustion of the land and the present height of prices which obliged the farmers to mix oats, bran, and even bark of trees with their bread,' but nevertheless, they undertook a debt of 300,000, and agreed to pay 20,000 gulden into the treasury. In this same year, the revenues amounted to 150,000 gulden, the expenditure to more than 414,000. In 1572 the court officials alone absorbed 100,000 gulden, a sum equal to the whole contents of the treasury coffers. For the payment of debts the Estates went on consenting to more and more taxes, but at the same time repeatedly urged the Duke 'for God's sake to look into his affairs, especially as regards tailoring, hunting, singers and musicians, buildings,

drunkenness, no more credit. Three things are grievous in Würtemberg: much game, much socage, much debt. Three things are unrelentingly punished in Würtemberg: poaching, failing to pay taxes, enraging officials. Three things are lightly punished or not punished in Würtemberg: murder and insolence by nobles, thieving by high officials, the usurious contracts and title deeds of the rich. Three things are disappearing in Würtemberg: ecclesiastical revenues, public money and provisions.'—*Zeitschr. für deutsche Kulturgesch.*, year 1859, pp. 791–792.

purchases, and presents.[1] On his death in 1579 Albert bequeathed his son William V. a burden of debts amounting to 2,336,000 gulden. By 1583 a further sum of 731,000 gulden had mounted up, and the Estates had to pay it off. That the reduction of the court establishment, as the Duke asserted, had been thoroughly carried out, the Estates could scarcely allow, seeing that the retinue of William in 1588 consisted of 771 persons, and that of the Duchess of 44. 'The debt imposed on the country,' said the Estates in the same year, 'was 1,400,000 gulden heavier than under Duke Albert, and it could not in the end be paid under those princes; how much less then would it be possible when the land had become still poorer.' When William, in 1593, summoned a Diet at Landshut, he appeared there, accompanied by his wife, his brother Ferdinand, and his eldest son, Maximilian, and with an escort of 317 persons, and 346 horses, and demanded of his Estates that they should take over a fresh debt of 1,500,000 gulden, which had accumulated since 1588. More urgently than ever the Estates impressed upon him that 'they could not impose fresh taxes on the peasants without fear of an insurrection, for they were already well nigh beggared; twelve times already since 1577 had the twentieth part of their capital been wrung from them in taxes; since 1563 the country had granted ten millions for debts and interest.' Still even now they took over this debt of 1,500,000, in addition to which they voted a yearly additional grant to the treasury of 50,000 gulden, a rise

[1] v. Freyberg, *Landstände*, ii. 373 ff. Concerning Albert's purchases in costly jewellery see our remarks above p. 274. ** Fuller details about the absurdly brilliant and costly life at the court of the Bavarian Hereditary Prince William (later Duke William V.) at Landshut are given by Trautmann in the *Jahrbuch für Münchener Gesch.* i. 236–247.

on the taxes on mead, beer, and brandy, and a salt-tax the revenue from which the Duke reckoned at 100,000 gulden.[1]

Not till William, in 1598, made over the government to Maximilian I. was good order and management introduced into state affairs, and the quiet sober life at the court of Münich made a favourable impression all round. William in his simple retired life devoted himself to philanthrophy, and ate his meals with his wife, off earthen plates. 'Their Highnesses,' wrote the Augsburg Protestant, Philip Hainhofer, who visited the court of Munich in 1611, 'have a covered way to their Pilgrim house, in which they constantly give hospitality to strangers and travellers, whom they feed and clothe, and to whom they also give money; they feed daily twelve poor men and twelve women and give them clothes twice a year; they visit the sick and the poor, give largely in alms, and they are indeed patrons of the poor.' The Duke wished that his prayers should ascend to heaven on the two wings of fasting and almsgiving, and acted up to the maxim 'to whom much is given, of him is much requred.' 'At the court of Duke Maximilian,' Hainhofer goes on, 'everything is very plain and simple, compared with other princely courts.' 'As far as money expenses go, all is regulated after the manner of Italian princes, secular and ecclesiastical, and you do not find many tables covered and loaded in the knights' halls and in the "Dürnitz."[2] Through this economical régime 'many thousands of guldens were saved every year, and old debts paid off at this Bavarian court.'

[1] v. Freyberg, *Landstände*, ii. 402 ff. Rudhart, *Landstände in Bayern*, ii. 224. Sugenheim, *Bayerns Zustände*, 404 ff.

[2] A room that could be heated. Dining- and guest-room.

'Superfluous eating and drinking, card playing, hunting, tourneying and other diversions and vanities their Highnesses do not care for; they maintain good government, and they earn great respect and obedience; they are very zealous in their papal religion, confess and communicate frequently, and go regularly to church; they are also diligent in the council chamber, and by their godfearingness, temperance, Christian life, and good example, they influence their officials and councillors to be pious and diligent also.' In 1613 Hainhofer wrote again from Munich: 'At this court there is excellent management in every department, punctual payment, sober, quiet and peaceful living. The reigning prince makes himself feared and loved by all his councillors; he is at work early and late.' Hainhofer was present in this same year at Munich at the marriage of the Count Palatine Wolfgang William with the Bavarian Princess Magdalena, and wrote about it as follows: 'The princely nuptials are over and all went off well and peacefully, except that the Count of Eisenberg wanted to fight a duel with a "Truchsess" of Duke Maximilian's; as soon, however, as Maximilian heard of it he ordered them to keep the peace.' 'Of eating and drinking there was no lack, but during the whole eight days, I did not see one drunken man, or one man even the worse for drink.'[1] 'At court, where everything was served in silver dishes and eaten off silver, it is a wonder that nothing was lost, and that all went off so quietly, just as if there had been no foreign lordships there. Their Highnesses managed everything extremely well and expeditiously.'[2] This account is entirely in accordance with what the Belgian, Thomas Fyens, for a time house

[1] See above, p. 231. [2] In Häutle, 63, 77–79, 164, 238, 239.

physician to Maximilian, wrote to Justus Lipsius on July 31, 1601, about the duke, the court life and the court people. 'The town of Munich,' he added, 'is certainly beautiful, populous and large, it has very high buildings, and very clean and resplendent streets, and the inhabitants are better behaved than in the rest of Germany.' [1]

Justice requires it to be stated that in those terrible times there were some Protestant courts which shone as centres of light. In this respect the Saxon Electress Anna, wife of Augustus I. of Saxony, is especially

[1] 'Serenissimus Dux noster (Maximilianus) et coniux eius firma valetudine sunt, nihil praeter infoecunditatem dolentes. Principes certe sunt piissimi, benignissimi, et prudentissimi. Ipse Dux in nullo non scientiae genere versatus. Latine, italice, gallice est peritissimus; moribus modestus, sapientia maturus et circumspectus in loquendo, in vultu et moribus gravitatem cum quadam benignitate coniunctam gerens.' 'Omnes nobiles aulici modesti, morati, probi, omne vitium ex ista aula exulat, ebriosos, leves, inertes homines Princeps odit et contemnit. Omnia ad virtutem, modestiam, pietatem comparata. Senior Dux Guilielmus, moderni Ducis pater, in publico nusquam comparet, cum sua sanctissima coniuge Renata vitam quasi monasticam degit apud Patres Societatis in palatio, quod sibi iuxta, imo in collegio eorum exstruxit.' 'Urbs Monacensis est certe pulchra, populosa, magna et altissimis constructa aedificiis, nitidissimis et mundissimis strata plateis. Homines magis quam in alia Germania morati.'—Petri Burmanni, *Sylloge epistolarum*, ii. 80, 81. Cf. F. Stieve, 'Urteile über München,' in the *Jahrbuch für Münchener Gesch.* i. 324. ** A fine eulogy was bestowed on Munich at the beginning of the seventeenth century by the Augustinian monk Milensius. He wrote: 'If we contemplate the zeal of this town for the old Catholic faith, the piety of the dukes and the burghers, the splendour of the churches, the reverence for the clergy, the lives and the morals of all the inhabitants, who are distinguished by almost monastical chastity and reserve, we may well say that the whole town is as a cloister, and that it does not undeservedly bear its name (Monachium), nor does it without right bear monastic insignia (a monk, the well-known Munich token) on its coat of arms.' Milensius, *Alphabetum de monachis et monasteriis Germaniae et Sarmatiae citerioris Ord. Erem. S. Augustini* (Prague, 1613), 105. Paulus Hoffmeister, 229.

deserving of notice. This woman of uncommon originality and moral firmness had no easy post by the side of her most highly irascible and passionate husband. However, she had learnt, as a contemporary says in her praise, 'when Augustus raged, to pacify him; when he was offended, to reconcile him; when he refused a petition, to obtain his consent.' In the bringing up of the fifteen children whom Anna presented to her lord, she was most conscientious; in times of illness she shrunk from no personal sacrifice. The education of the children was conducted on the principles of simplicity, obedience, and religion. With noble benevolence and real goodness of heart Anna looked after her subjects. This same woman, however, showed almost unheard of stony-heartedness, whenever her Lutheranism was called in question. To Calvinists she was as intolerant as to Catholics. The court preacher Mirus emphatically praises 'her burning zeal against the now rampant blasphemy of Calvinism.' [1]

[1] ** Cf. the article, composed with the help of Weber's work (Leipzig, 1865): 'Eine deutsche Fürstin des 16ten Jahrhunderts,' in the *Histor. polit. Bl.* 98, 333 ff., 450 ff., 512 ff.

## CHAPTER II

### LIFE OF THE NOBLES

THE life of the princes, 'with the majority of them made up of inordinate eating and drinking, innumerable and lengthy festivities, pomp and luxury in dress and adornment, was taken as a model by nobles, burghers and peasants, so that, as was plain to all beholders, the one sought to outstrip the other.' [1]

As the lesser princes, down to the least, copied the greater ones in every imaginable luxury, and were in their turn taken as models by the counts, 'so the nobles in their castles aped the extravagance of the counts'—above all in eating and drinking.

'With so much eating and drinking,' wrote Cyriacus Spangenberg in his 'Adelsspiegel' in 1594, 'it seems nowadays as if people were deliberately bent on stifling

[1] *Von den vielen Anzeichen*, &c. Cf. above, p. 263, n. 1. ** Concerning the thoroughgoing social revolution which came about towards the close of the sixteenth century, Steinhausen aptly remarks ('Die Anfänge des französischen Literatur- und Kultureinflusses' in the *Zeitschr. für vergl. Lit. Gesch.*, new series, vii. [1894], 372): 'Formerly the burghers had set the fashion, and princes and burghers were scarcely distinguishable in the manner and conditions of their life. But now the burghers had to stand back. With the loss of their political might their moral and intellectual independence collapsed also, while on the other hand, with the growth of territorial power, the influence of the princes and their courts rose higher. What the court did was now the standard of society, and was imitated even in the sixteenth century and still more so in the seventeenth. First of all the nobles copied the court, and then the burghers followed suit, and became more and more servile.'

and destroying nature. There is verily need for a good, sound reformation, but those who know all this and who ought to set things right, are so intent on keeping up state and splendour that they give others the strongest incitement to follow their example. What goes on at the great princes' courts at christenings, weddings, banquetings, home-comings, shootings and so forth, is not only witnessed on the spot, but one learns it as one travels about from the appearance of the poor people, who have to help and contribute to the pomp, from their sorrowful eyes and their emaciated bodies. And what the nobles see at the princes' courts, they must needs copy at their christenings, dances, &c. Many of the nobles, if only one friend comes to dine with another, have everything served à la count or prince. They are not content with the ordinary food of the land, good fish and game, but must have all sorts of Italian dishes, and outlandish concoctions of oysters and rare birds, fish and vegetables brought from a distance; also, not only one or two beverages, but four, five and even more kinds of wine, without mentioning malmsey, Reinfall, Spanish and French wines, and three or four sorts of beer. They keep up state with gilded and silvered plates and dishes, but where has God decreed that man should eat and drink off gold and silver?'[1]

The culinary artist, Marx Rumpolt, was of opinion that for a banquet of counts or lords about sixty dishes were enough, and for a banquet of nobles, forty-five or even fewer.[2] But this number was by no means sufficient for many of them.

[1] *Adelsspiegel*, ii. 248–249.

[2] Rumpolt, 30ᵇ–37ᵇ, where there is a list of dishes.

'At the wedding banquet of a Tyrolese baron,' so Hippolytus Guarinoni relates, 'there were 300 dishes and 100 sorts of confetti and dainties. In 1610, at the wedding of an ordinary nobleman at Hall there were seven tables well filled with wedding guests or wedding gluttons; it lasted two days; at every table there were four courses, and for every course 13 imposing dishes; at another table there were 52 dishes; at seven tables 364 dishes; at two meals 728 dishes were served; during two days 1456 dishes. I say nothing here of all sorts of wine and of all the crowd of drunken people.' In the Tyrol at 'festive meals' there were sometimes twenty kinds of wine placed before the guests.[1] 'For several years past,' it says in an ordinance of Duke Maximilian I. of Bavaria, of March 26, 1599, 'there has been a very marked falling off of temporal means, especially among the knights and nobles, owing to the unnecessary and extravagant outlay that takes place at weddings': in order to reduce this expenditure it was decreed that none of the nobles should in future spend more than 1000–1500, at the outside 2000 gulden, on their wedding festivities.[2]

The Bavarian, Count Ladislaus zum Hag († 1567), had spent nearly 42,000 gulden on wedding festivities, i.e., according to the present value of money, half a million marks.[3] Duke Henry Julius of Brandenburg, in 1595, considered it a great piece of extravagance for the young Burkhard of Saldern to have had at his wedding, 'twenty-eight barrels of Einbeck beer' which 'had to be sent at great expense to the scene of the festivities.' 'Daily,' he said, 'at this wedding, 500 horses were fed.

[1] Guarinoni, 793, 798, 804–805.

[2] Westenrieder, *Neue Beiträge*, i. 287–288.

[3] Köhler, *Münzbelustigungen*, xv. 46.

'At the home-coming eighty firkins of wine were consumed, besides all sorts of sweet drinks, double Brunswick, Muhme, Zerbst and Goslar beer, and also Hanover Brühan. These wedding and home-coming expenses mounted up to 5,600 Reichsthaler.' During this home-coming Burkhard had had everything done on the scale of a prince, or at least a count, had feasted fifteen tables full of servants, boys, coachmen and players with twelve different dishes at one meal. On Sunday they were given Muhme to drink and other beer, but on Monday and Tuesday drinks of another kind, as much as they could get down. At his own and the bride's and their friends' tables there were such grand, splendid, costly and superfluous dishes such as had never before been seen at the tables of such persons. The same princely pomp was kept up also at the dancing. Players and actors had been procured from different places, and numbered twenty-seven in all.[1] In Brunswick itself there had been grand doings when the Prince's tutor, Kurd von Schwicheldt, was married in 1580. At the festivities, which lasted four days, there were guests with 600 horses; on each of the four days 75 tables were laid. Amongst other provisions that were consumed were 20 oxen, 36 pigs, 80 wethers, 40 calves, 80 lambs, 32 sucking-pigs, 240 geese, 580 chickens, 12 stags and heads of venison, 12 wild swans, 16 roes, 50 hares, 20 sides of bacon, 6 schocks of large pike, 8 schocks of carps; further, 6 hogsheads of wine, 2 barrels of malmsey, 2 barrels of Alicant wine, 2 barrels of Rhine wine, 12 tuns of Hamburg beer, 8 barrels of Einbeck beer, 24 tuns of Hanover Brühan, 6 barrels of Zerbst beer, 10 barrels of 'Goslar Krug,' 54 barrels of ordinary Goslar beer,

[1] Köhler, xvi. 168.

4 barrels of Brunswick malmsey.[1] 'Still more thirsty for honest drink' were the 'noble throats' at the wedding of Conrad von Sikingen and Elizabeth von Cronberg: within five days they drank 113 hogsheads of wine.[2] The councillor of the Elector of Cologne, Caspar von Fürstenberg, calculated the expenses of his son's wedding in 1608 at 2500 thalers, 'if not more.' The festivities lasted from the 12th to the 18th of October; the home-bringing of the bride to the Castle Bilstein began on November 3, and 'four days were spent in dancing, drinking and diversions.'[3] At the wedding festivities of Herr Burkhard Schenk with the widow von Hohenstein in 1598, 58 persons from among the nobility alone, were invited to the solemnity.[4] But all the counts and princes in the Empire were surpassed by the Bohemian nobleman, William von Rosenberg. When in 1576 he was married to Anna Maria of Baden, 1100 firkins of Hungarian, Rhenish and other German wines were drunk, 40 pipes (about 12,000 measures) of Spanish wine, 903 barrels of barley and wheaten beer, and so forth: the horses ate 37,033 bushels of oats.[5]

[1] Bodemann, *Herzog Julius von Braunschweig*, 332–333.

[2] *Die Vorzeit.* Jahrg. 1825, p. 177, note. [3] Pieler, 294–296.

[4] Richard, *Licht und Schatten*, 25–26.

[5] Vulpius, i. 200–201. Roscher, *Luxus*, 56; cf. Chmel, *Handschriften*, i. 378. ** At other kinds of festivities also, as Schmid points out in the *Histor. Jahrbuch*, xvii., the nobles vied with the princes in all sorts of costly displays and pageants. The *Öhringer Oberamtsbeschreibung* gives an account of one of these masquerades in 1570, which took a fatal turn; at Waldenburg the noble ladies dressed themselves as angels, and the noblemen disguised themselves 'in horrible attire such as that in which it is customary to paint the bad spirits.' During the 'Mumtanz' the yarn which they had bound tightly round and round their arms and legs took fire. Two nobles, Count Eberhard von Hohenlohe-Waldenburg, and his son-in-law, Count George von Tübingen, died of their wounds, and several others were obliged to remain for weeks in bed.

How greatly the love of fine clothes and costly jewellery went on increasing among the nobles, is shown, for instance, by comparison of the inventory of the Palatine nobleman Meinhard von Schönberg in 1598, with that of his son Hans Meinhard in 1616. The father possessed only a few articles in gold and jewellery, in silver utensils only 1 can, 30 beakers, 2 salt-cellars, and 28 spoons; the son, on the contrary, had amongst other things: a number of silver washing bowls and jugs, spoons, plates, candlesticks, and writing things; a diamond chain set in gold with 115 links; a gold rose chain of 40 diamonds; a medal set with 63 diamonds; a golden rose with 41 diamonds; 9 diamond buttons; 2 blue enamelled stars, each with 7 diamonds; a gold tuft of feathers and gold hat-clasp with 23 gold stars, each containing 7 diamonds. The pearl ornaments alone would have filled two closely written folio sheets. The increase of luxury comes out most clearly in the clothing. The entire wardrobe of the father is catalogued on two pages; that of the son takes up ten full sheets. The father was content with two or three coats of velvet and silk, the son required more than seventy-two complete suits. Most of the son's clothes were of satin of many colours, lined or slashed with gold, silver, or silk, often embroidered with both gold and silver. In place of the biretta we find twenty-one costly French and Spanish hats, and hat-bands enough to match every different coloured suit, embroidered with gold, silver and pearls. There were also silk stockings of different colours to match the suits of clothes, with gold or silver clocks. Also for every different suit special garters and shoe rosettes, edged with gold and silver lace. The quantity of gloves

embroidered with gold and silver was so large that it seems to have been necessary to have a different pair for every suit. While the father was satisfied with his simple wainscoted room, his great massive bedstead, and solid, durable wooden chairs, the son had richly tapestried apartments, beds of velvet and silk, embroidered with gold and silver flowers. The father left at his death two horses and a well-battered coach; the son left fourteen horses with splendid accoutrements, the list of which fills eight folio pages. Also a number of velvet saddles embroidered with gold and silver; ladies' saddles are also in the list, and stirrups gilded and plated.[1] The Brunswicker Burkhard von Saldern had a saloon built to his house the decoration of which with green cloth cost several thousand thalers, 'not including the painting and gold work that was on the cloth.'[2] A morality preacher complained that 500–600 guldens were often given for one bed.[3] Count Günther of Schwarzburg in 1560 spent 10,000 Reichsthalers on tapestry, carpets and curtains for his rooms.[4]

[1] Extract from the inventories in Moser's *Patriot. Archiv*, viii. 235–248, contributed, without reference to Moser, by Chr. v. Stramberg in the *Zeitschr. für deutsche Kulturgesch.* (year 1858), p. 232–240. In the wardrobe of the Countess Hans Heinrich von Schönberg there were in 1605 numbers of garments worked with gold and silver, '45 pairs of large cloths, and besides the head parures and other jewellery, 1 loose wrap, an ornament worth one hundred gold guldens, 15 small link chains with 1 ring worth 200 gold guldens, 1 pair of chains worth 230 gold guldens, 2 linked chains worth 206 gold guldens, 1 carcanet worth 40 gold guldens, 1 small chain worth 27 gold guldens, besides pearl chains, gold, gilded and silver girdles, bracelets,' and so forth. Fraustadt, i. 518.

[2] Köhler, xvi. 168.

[3] *Theatrum Diabolorum*, 385.

[4] Vulpius, x. 190. ** Caspar von Fürstenberg paid 120 Reichsthalers for a hat-band. His gold ornaments weighed 27½ pounds, 2 ounces; for half this sum he could have bought a magnificent house in Mayence, with vineyards &c., &c. Pieler, 163–164.

'For many years,' it says in a pamphlet, 'there have been but few among the nobles who have not complained of great and excessive debts; but however deep in debt they may be, they nevertheless indulge in as much pomp and extravagance in their household furnishings as if they possessed huge fortunes.'[1] When, for instance, Count Ulrich von Regenstein in 1541 gave his daughter in marriage to Count Wolfgang of Stolberg, his sum of debts was raised to an appalling height; one portion of his estates was mortgaged and many others were alienated, but nevertheless he let the bride be taken to the bridegroom in a carriage with six horses; four horses were harnessed to the carriage containing the clothes and jewels with which she was provided, like 'a daughter and a Countess of Regenstein:' 350 guests and horses took part in the procession. The prescribed daughter's dowry of 8000 guldens Ulrich could not pay, and he got himself into such difficulties that his numerous creditors pursued him with abusive letters and caricatures, and dragged his honour, his house and his race most offensively in the mud.[2]

Contemporaries universally agreed that one of the chief causes of the insolvency of the nobles was their 'unspeakable extravagance in dress and ornaments.' 'Many of the nobles,' wrote Cyriacus Spangenberg, 'have as many, and more, coats, mantles, cloaks, and suchlike, as there are Sundays in the year, not to mention

[1] *Von den vielen Auszeichen*, cf. above p. 263, n. 1.

[2] *Zeitschr. des Harzvereins*, vii. 4–32. ** Extraordinary luxury was also displayed in 1591 at the wedding of Anton Fugger with the Countess Barbara de Montfort. See L. Brunner, 'Aus dem Bildungsgange eines Ausburger Kaufmannssohnes am Schlusse des 16ten Jahrhunderts' in the *Zeitschr. des Historischen Vereins für Schwaben und Neuburg*, i. 175 note.

of the numberless hoods, hats, caps, girdles, gloves, chains, necklets, bracelets and rings.'[1] Saxon nobles wore trunk-hose of silk or gold stuffs, of which 60–80 ells were used; many of them even required 130 ells. A single pair of hose often cost more than 'the whole revenue of a village came to,' so that numbers of nobles reduced themselves to ruin by their dress. Coats lined with silk and velvet were also worn, and these cost 500 gulden. A countess was known to have had made for herself a golden train with very exquisite work, for which she paid the goldsmith 3500 gulden, besides 150 gulden for making it.'[2] It was regarded as an important reduction of noblemen's expenses that it was settled that a suit of clothes must not cost more than 200 gulden.[3]

'Very few would now be satisfied with the old manly style of dress worn by the German nobles in former days. It was old-fashioned, they said, out of date.' 'It has also come to this,' wrote Cyriacus Spangenberg in 1594, 'that nothing German, let alone anything ancient in the way of dress goes down with the nobles nowadays; everything must be foreign: Spanish hoods, French hose, Hungarian hats, Polish top-boots, Bohemian bonnets, Italian stomachers and collars.[4]

[1] *Adelsspiegel*, ii. 453.

[2] Richard, *Licht und Schatten*, 23. *Theatrum Diabolorum*, 391, 400. *Die Teufelstracht der Pluderhosen* (1592) p. 391; cf. Vulpius, i. 254.

[3] Cf. the 'Vereinbarung mehreren adeligen Familien im Braunschweigischen von Jahre 1618' in the *Zeitschr. für deutsche Kulturgesch.* (year 1856), p. 109. 'Even dogs' so the morality preachers complained, 'often had such costly collars, that many a poor man with his wife and children, who were let go naked, might have been clothed out of the money spent on those collars.'—*Adelsspiegel*, ii. 454b.

[4] ** In 1562 the Venetian ambassador Giacomo Soranzo, in his official reports on Germany, had already said that the German nobility had adopted Italian and Spanish fashions, *nè vivono secondo l'antico modo di Germania.*—Albéri, ser. 1, vol. vi. 126.

Moreover, everything has to be smart and many-coloured, trimmed, slashed, frilled, and furbelowed: some of them have their clothes so chopped and cut about that they look as if the pigs had been tearing at them and eating them up. And yet they think it a very exquisite get-up and swear they look mighty well in it.' 'And yet it does strike one as very absurd when a young gallant (and the old ones look still more idiotic) struts about with a pile of linen crimped, plaited, folded, twisted round his throat, over his ears and his head, like a bristly hedge, or else falling down over his shoulders —for that 's how the scandalous ruffles are made now— and also hanging over the hands as eagles' feathers cover their claws. It all looks as hideous as possible and gives no indication of a manly, robust spirit. Ah, if our forefathers, the brave, splendid, gallant men who died sixty, eighty, hundred years ago, could come back again now and see all this effeminacy and frivolity in their descendants, what do you think they would say about it? They would despise us, not only for such feminine ways, but also for the folly of spending so much unnecessary money on such unnecessary and also improper and scandalous clothing. One squire had three pairs of hose which cost him 800 crowns. Is it not a shame? I will not speak here of other unnecessary grandeur which has lately been witnessed, even in the matter of shoes, which are made of velvet, and also of gold stuff, and embroidered with pearls.'[1]

'Some of the nobles,' Spangenberg goes on, 'find their chief delight in gambling, and they will gamble away at one sitting several hundreds, or even thousands, of gulden. Others take pleasure in having a crowd

[1] *Adelsspiegel*, ii. 443, 454.

of attendants and servants; they have their own trumpeters, lute or guitar players, pipers, conjurers and fools, whom they dress up now in green, now in red, now in grey or blue, now in Hungarian or Brunswickian fashion, now with broad French hats, and so on. And when they carry on all this unnecessary extravagance in eating, drinking, dressing, building, gambling, they say' "Why not? Why shouldn't they do it; it's their own money and they may do what they like with it; they have not got to account to any one." But I answer them and say, "No, for all property is only lent to us by God; we are not lords over it, but only householders appointed by God, to whom in His own good time, we shall have to render account to a farthing of how we have spent it."'[1]

'This effeminacy in dress and luxury went hand in hand with a lazy, effeminate mode of life' (especially among the young men); nevertheless, it must not be forgotten that, like many of the princes, notably Albert V. of Bavaria, a good number of nobles also, such as John James von Fugger, John George von Werdenstein, H. J. von Lamberg, and finally the Thuringian family of Werther-Beichlingen, displayed noteworthy literary tastes.[2] 'The young nobles,' wrote Count Reinhard von Solms, 'have no other occupation than sleeping till high noon, and the rest of the day loafing about idly, flirting with the women, or playing with the dogs, and then drinking half through the night; next to this, all their thoughts are taken

[1] *Adelsspiegel*, ii. 456, 457.

[2] See *Histor. Jahrb.* xvii. 93, note 1. Here there are fuller details concerning the Werther library, which, after the death of Philip von Werther (1588), was bought by the Elector Christian I. of Saxony.

up with idiotic dressing and adornment; and when there comes a serious crisis, a campaign perchance, they care only for elegance and daintiness and for being well dressed, as if they were going off to a dance; for getting as many horses as possible of one colour, and a heap of gaily dressed lackeys, and other unnecessary attendants; besides keeping their own "Kadruschke" on a special coach, pompously arrayed—as if this were a fine thing to do—then trimming their beards and indulging in frivolities to their own and public disgrace.'[1]

'Formerly,' said Duke Julius of Brunswick, in 1588, 'the hardy, joyous Germans were renowned among all nations for their manly virtue; now, however, their brave and manly prowess and chivalry has not only markedly decreased, but almost altogether disappeared, and this has chiefly come about because nearly all our vassals, servants and relations alike, young and old, give themselves up to philandering and driving about in coaches. If they had to serve at court in former days they did not dare appear with coaches, but only with their riding horses.'[2]

Of the life of the nobles in general, the preachers especially give a far from edifying picture. 'Drunkenness,' wrote Luther, 'which like a sin-flood has deluged

[1] Spangenberg, *Adelsspiegel*, ii. 406[b]. ** 'The majority of the nobles of the sixteenth century,' says Steinhausen (*Gesch. des deutschen Briefes*, i. 1500), 'could not write, or at any rate only so imperfectly, that the few letters which they had to indite had to be made over to a secretary.' See l.c. p. 152, an example of the extremely clumsy style even of those nobles who were most skilled in writing.

[2] In v. Hormayr, *Taschenbuch*, new series, xvi. 265–270. Concerning the coach-driving of the nobles, see also the ordinances of the Elector Augustus of Saxony, of March 26, 1580, in the *Codex Augusteus*, i. 2185–2186, and of the Elector Joachim Frederick of Brandenburg, of March 24, 1607, in Mylius, iii. part 2, 15.

everything, reigns especially among the nobles.' 'I remember that when I was young drinking was considered a monstrous great scandal, and that laudable princes and lords stemmed it with severe ordinances and punishments. But now it is far worse among them than among the peasants: it is looked upon as an aristocratic virtue; whosoever will not join them in becoming a drunken hog is despised. But what indeed is more to be shunned than this vice, which has spread even to the young, who have learned it from their elders and who practise it so shamelessly, flagrantly and unsparingly that they are ruined in their earliest years, like young corn blighted by hail and rain storms, for nowadays most of our best and cleverest young people, above all among the nobles and at court, ruin their health and lives in this way before they have come to years of discretion?'[1] 'The nobles,' said Nicholas Selnekker, in 1565, 'are for the most part epicures, filthy pigs, blasphemers, pompous, arrogant fellows, disgusting gorgers and drinkers, given up to all sorts of vice and iniquity, regarding all honour and chastity as a disgrace, and all sin and scandal as honour, and all immorality and filthiness as something to boast of; all God-fearing people on the earth they avoid, and think them scarcely worthy to be shone on by the beautiful sun, still less to be used for the honour of God and the protection of the land and its inhabitants. Furthermore, they are the deadly enemies of God the Lord and of His Word, and treat and call everything that God causes to be said to them as priestly cant, fables and folly. They set their strength in defiance and arrogance; their piety in blasphemy, contempt

[1] See our remarks, vol. iv. 145 ff.

of God's word and contempt of all its ministers; their chastity is whoredom, coarse and obscene speech and gestures, devouring, imbibing and vomiting; their rightful authority is turned to violence, arrogance, crime, defiance, injustice, despising and circumventing everybody just as they please. Their get-up is French, their breath stinks, their hands and feet are mangy, they are always panting and gasping. No wonder then that they are almost everywhere despised by the common people.' [1]

The preacher David Veit said in 1581 in a funeral sermon on Hans von Selwitz, who was mortally wounded in a nocturnal fray at Jena: 'It is with great sorrow that we hear and experience how the highest in the land, those who, on account of their noble birth and lineage, should be more addicted than others to godliness, honour and virtue, have come to this, that they think no one worthy to be regarded as a nobleman who does not utter the most terrible and blasphemous curses, or who in talking about matrimony, about young girls and women, does not introduce the coarsest and most immoral words and gestures. How utterly epicurean and depraved they have become in the matter of drinking is as broad as daylight. Not content with small cans and other ordinary drinking utensils, they use tubs, coops, and other things of the sort which are meant for the unreasoning cattle. How immorality, also, gains head amid such kind of living is manifest to all and truly lamentable.' [2]

[1] *Auslegung des Psalters* (Nuremberg, 1565), ii. 78 and iii. 131.

[2] *Eine Predigt über der Leiche &c.* (Jhena, 1581), Bl. E$^2$. Wolfgang Bütner, pastor at Wolferstedt, wrote in 1576: 'The Lacedæmonians never tolerated among them fellows basking in the sun or wearing slippers all day long. If the Lacedæmonians could see our squires in this land to-day, the night ravens, the beer and wine bibbers, the gamblers and

Similarly wrote Spangenberg in his 'Adelsspiegel': 'The majority of the nobles are addicted to drink. They often have to sell or mortgage a mill, an ale-house, a pond, a carriage, often even a whole village in order to get enough liquor to drown themselves in. And they are not satisfied with drinking themselves to their hearts' content, but they compel others, often with curses, to drink with them interminably; they drink to one another by rows of pots, an ell, or a quarter ell, or also less in length; or by weight of so many pounds. Sometimes they drink out of two glasses at a time. . . . Sometimes they put small live fishes into the beer and gulp them down with the drink. They are not content with glasses, beakers, flasks &c., but like pigs they drink out of tubs, barrels, skulls, boots, and unmentionable articles. Once a cat, thrown on the table, was torn in two and then used as a drinking vessel. Some would swallow the glass itself or their ruffles—which did them little good. For thus,' Spangenberg goes on, 'does drinking lead people to inhuman atrocities and make them senseless, mad, beside themselves, as though they were live devils out of hell.' Not few in number were the 'drunken brothers' described in 1598 by the Bavarian Ducal Secretary Aegidius Albertinus, who when they had drunk up all their patrimony went from one friendly (or unfriendly !) nobleman to another and helped him to do the same; or even went from one convent to another and caroused in these as though they were only founded for the use of such drunken, debased fellows, and

the whoremongers, and were to punish their devilish indolence, laziness and sluggishness, God help us, where would our pastor and our chaplain at St. John's Cathedral, *en campo flore et vacca del porta*, find room for their bushy beards and their high heels ?'—*Archiv für Liberaturgesch.* vi. 311.

not for the maintenance of devout, prayerful, religious men.' [1]

[1] *De conviviis*, 76[b]. Philip Camerarius gives an account of a drinking tournament at the wedding of a nobleman when the prize was won by a man who in a few hours drank eighteen measures of wine. Carpzov, *Practica Nova*, iii. 374. Concerning immoderate drinking at the court of the Count of Mansfeld (1564), see Spangenberg, *Sächsische Chronika*, 701. Of Count Christopher Ludwig von Wertheim we read in a report of 1612: 'Senior goes on in his old ways at Löwenstein. The silver flask goes round day and night, and there is such an amount of drinking, that according to the accounts of the Captain von Hall, he is likely to reduce himself to insanity.'—A. Kaufmann, 312. Concerning the drunken doings of the Hessian squires 'who when reeling with drink staggered about in the fields, and fired guns, with the result that one of them was killed,' see the letter of the Landgrave William IV., of October 1585 to the Mayor of Homberg in *Die Vorzeit* (year 1823), pp. 317–319. Of Jerome von Schallenberg it is said: 'He has lately drunk day and night without ceasing and in one hour he died in the tavern.'—v. Hormayr, *Taschenbuch*, new series, viii. 230. A truly appalling account of a nobleman's drinking bout is given by Bartholomew Ringwalt in his *Speculum Mundi* (Mirror of the World) [1590] Bl. A 6[b]–D 4, E 3–F 5; see our remarks vol. xii. 120–128. Cardinal Otto of Augsburg founded, in 1545, with forty-two counts and barons, a society for the abolition of 'drinking toasts,' which were the ruin of the nobles.—*Histor. Jahrb. der Görres-Gesellschaft* (year 1886), p. 192. Christopher Vitzthum von Eckstädt and Vespasian von Rheinsberg announced on January 1, 1592: 'We have had two silver flasks made of the same size and pattern, and each person shall be free, at honourable gatherings, where a drink of welcome is a matter of etiquette, to drink this prescribed measure in one day either before or after noon, three times at the utmost: after the three flasks no one shall drink except for thirst, be it wine or beer.' A fine of 1000 gulden was the punishment for exceeding this quantity.—Müller, *Trinkstuben*, 727–728. When Andreas von Roebell obtained a canonry at Havelberg from the Brandenburg Elector John George, he took a vow on January 26, 1577, 'on the honour and faith of a nobleman,' that he would abstain from drunkenness and that he would not drink more at each meal than two good-sized beakers of beer and wine. If he should be found drunk, without electoral permission, he would, as soon as he was called upon to do so, repair to the kitchen, 'and with forty stripes save one, the same number that had been inflicted on St. Paul, if so be his electoral grace should order it, he would submit to being beaten with the rod.'—v. Hormayr, *Taschenbuch*, new series, xx. 141–142.

'Decried to the uttermost, and, like the drinking-carousals, a most iniquitous example for the people, were the mad, villainous, immoral dances which were given by the nobles, and were veritable devil's schools and orgies in town and country.'[1] They were often of such a profligate character that special statutes were drawn up concerning them for the protection of respectable people. Thus for instance in the 'Statutes for the nobility's dance at Delitsch which takes place annually on the festival of St. Peter and St. Paul,' it was decreed that 'each person in dancing shall behave properly and morally, not throw off mantles, run and scream, carrying women and girls along with them,' &c., &c. 'They shall not behave wantonly towards the women, as for instance, tearing off their hoods, and so forth.' 'Wild, bold, ill-behaved young women, who set a bad example to other worthy and discreet ladies, shall be turned out by suitable means, and not tolerated.' 'The unsteady, impudent youngsters were admonished not to attack the watchmen at night: transgressors of this rule were to be fined ten thalers.'[2]

The gambling and drinking with which such countless numbers of the nobles disgraced themselves were closely connected with 'nocturnal frays and tumults, often ending in mortal wounds, and with the now almost universal vice of swearing and blaspheming.' 'Who,' asked a preacher in 1561, 'has ever been in the company of nobles without having been shocked most of the time by their devilish cursing and swearing?' 'This is so notorious that the small number of thoughtful members of the nobility acknowledge without scruple that this

[1] *Vom geilen und gotteslästerlichen Tantzen* (1560), p. 4.
[2] *Curiosa Saxon.*, 1764, p. 77.

accursed vice is nowhere so common as in their class.' 'I say this with sorrow, all the more so that I am not an enemy of the nobles, by no means, on the contrary I honour and respect them when they are worthy of their name, and I have several friends amongst them who are kind to me and my children, and they do not deny that what I say is true.'[1] Enemies of the nobility, like Nicodemus Frischlin declared that: 'In some country districts the nobles had made a compact together and sworn that no one of them should go to bed or get up, that none of them should greet another except in the Devil's name. I shudder to talk of it.'[2]

'Verily,' writes a contemporary, 'those squires are not very well spoken of, who let their parish churches go to such wrack and ruin that neither roofs nor walls are fit for anything, but in such a tumbledown condition that you can see through them everywhere; and the people during service, and the preacher himself in the pulpit, in winter when the weather is rainy, can scarcely keep themselves dry, besides which these churches are often as dark and smoky as caverns. They also frequently let the schools built by their forefathers go to ruin, no less than the hospitals and sick-houses built by their ancestors out of Christian love. Formerly a great deal of money was spent on matins books, missals, antiphonia, psalters, beautifully written on parchment; then everybody gave gladly towards providing them, each one wanted to be remembered by the good work;

[1] 'Vom Fluchen und Gotteslästern, insonders unter hohen Personen,' *Eine Haussprédigt* (1561) Bl. B. und C².

[2] Strauss, 179 ff. Frischlin's description of the nobles in his *Oratio de vita rustica* is excessively coarse, but in its main features scarcely exaggerated. Cf. Wachsmuth, v. 293.

but now when a squire ought to buy a Bible in church there is nothing but reluctance and excuses.' [1]

'In former days the squires thought it a great disgrace if each one of them had not contributed something to the maintenance of divine service. They would give 50, 100, 200 gulden. But when do we hear nowadays of any of the nobles giving 10, or even 5 gulden towards keeping up the churches and schools, which nevertheless are the two best jewels of every fatherland? Yea verily, if only they would leave alone that which others have given for this object!' [2] 'We see, hear, and experience daily now, as is happening everywhere, one grabs from the church and appropriates a bit of rent, another a tithe, a third a plot of ground, a fourth a meadow, a fifth a copse, a sixth a garden, a seventh a vineyard, an eighth a hop-garden, a ninth a piece of grazing land, a tenth a fish-pond, an eleventh, some other appurtenage, revenue or privilege. In short they all want to have a portion of our Lord God's garment, and none will be the last. There were of old numbers of churches, parsonages, chaplaincies and schools so well endowed and provided for that their incumbents and masters were comfortably off; but now they are no longer so, for the squires take the parish property under their own control and give the pastors what they like; they take the fields, they themselves covet and give worse ones in exchange, they buy up land, but do not pay the taxes, and practise other meannesses, and so forth.' [3] Bernhard Hund, councillor of Duke John, Elector of Saxony, has often said: 'We nobles have added the convent goods to our own baronial goods, and the

[1] 'Vom Fluchen und Gotteslästern,' Bl. C. *Adelsspiegel*, ii. 392–393[b].
[2] *Ibid.* 423[b]. [3] *Ibid.* 394–395.

convent goods have devoured our baronial goods, so that we have neither convent goods nor baronial goods left.'[1]

'In order to help themselves out of their difficulties the squires now generally resort to all sorts of commercial business, shopkeeping and trading, baking, brewing and selling wine. This now forms part of the life of the nobles, and it would at any rate be better than idling about, reclining on cushions, and emptying jugs and beakers (though the nobles of the past did not think it worthy of their class), if only this trading were carried on to the profit and good of their subjects; but far from this being the case, the subjects are generally in the highest degree injured by this new pursuit of the nobles, as is sufficiently complained of in all directions: this new aristocratic occupation has indeed become a new form of merciless peasant fleecing, especially when the nobles are not only vendors but forestallers and raise all the prices.' 'Many of them are not satisfied with turning into merchants and shopkeepers, with usurping all burgher maintenance, with driving oxen, brewing, baking, wine-selling and butchering, but what is far worse they become monopolists, buy up all the wine, corn, wool, hops and such like, become in short forestallers and then, further, in times of dearness, fleecers and bleeders of the poor. They corner the wheat for times of scarcity, buy the worst and most inferior wines, and afterwards free them on their poor toiling vassals at as high a price as they would have to pay for good wine. They brew bad unwholesome beer, sell it at an equally high price, and compel the poor people, on penalty of a large fine, to drink this mud-water, and when they are tired out, exhausted, or even ill, will not allow them to buy any

[1] *Adelsspiegel*, ii. 64[b].

other drink, whether wine or beer anywhere else. They deal in all kinds of food like veritable pork butchers and at much higher rates than other vendors; they compel the butchers to keep their meat until they (the squires) have sold theirs and fleeced their lambs. 'There are some also who rather than sell their fruits to their poor vassals at a low price will let them be devoured by mice, or grow alive on the floor and fly out of the window. I knew one such man, who sooner than let the poor people buy his corn at the usual price, out of great wickedness, had it all shaken down from the window into the river Saale.' The common people speak of the nobles as of wolves: 'the younger the better,' they say, 'for the young ones cannot do so much harm as the old ones.'[1]

As regards also their attitude towards all that was foreign, especially to French influences, the nobles and

[1] Eine Predig, *Ob christliche Barmherzigkeit müsse ausgestorben sein?* (1569) Bl. $A^2$. *Adesspiegel*, ii. 347, 357, 461[b]. Cf. Strigenicius, *Diluvium*, 185. ** Concerning the fight between the nobles and the towns brought on by similar proceedings of the nobles in Pomerania see Spahn, *Verfassungs- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte des Herzogtums Pommern*, 163ff. The convert Gerhard Lorichius, then pastor in Wetzlar, wrote as follows of the nobles: 'Qui hodie nobilitatis gloriam sibi vendicant, prae ceteris sunt fere omnes inhumani, illiberales, astuti, feroces, difficiles, insuaves, intractabiles, severi, semper ad ulciscendum si quam acceperunt iniuriolam, proni. . . Sunt etiam legum egregii contemptores nobilistae nostrates. . . Hic assiduas crapulas, vestium et luxum phrigium et vanitatem insanam praeteriero, non hic molliciam sardanapalicam indicavero, non denique scortationes, stupra et adulteria, non propudiosum et infandum fastum, usuram et quaeque avaritia monumenta proferam. . . . . Quis hodie latrocinando grassatur liberius, quis praedatur audacius, quis publicam pacem perturbat frequentius atque paludati nostrates et eorum ministri? . . . . Adeo crudelitas in Germania invalescit, ut etiam sanguinarii homines, homicidae sacrilegi, imo etiam qui ferro et igne omnio devastant incendiarii, nobilitatis absolutae gloriam sibi mereantur.' Monotessaron passionis Christi Jesu, cum expositione omnigenae orthodoxae doctrinae fecunda . . . authore Gerhardo Lorichio Hadamario (Salingiaci [Solingen] 1553) p. f18a.

still more the burghers, imitated the princes. For instance it had become the fashion among Protestant Princes in the course of the sixteenth century, to introduce a strong French element in the education of their sons, and this custom spread among the nobles.[1]

[1] Concerning the spread of French influence, in the higher circles especially, see G. Steinhausen's treatise, 'Die Aufänge des französischen Literatur- und Kultureinflusses in Deutschland in neuerer Zeit,' in Koch's *Zeitschr. für vergleich. Literaturgesch.*, New Series, 7 (1894), especially p. 366 ff., 370. In France they found 'a new ideal of culture and life which incited them to imitation,' p. 352. See also the same author's *Gesch. des deutschen Briefes*, ii. 5 ff.

# CHAPTER III

## BURGHER AND PEASANT LIFE

'If anyone,' says a Christian sermon of 1573, 'should want to describe the life of the burghers and peasants of our time he must begin with the inordinate, extravagant display in dress and jewellery of all sorts, which is now the fashion among the burghers and peasants, and even among the lowest orders, and then next speak of the bestial gorging and drinking, of the inhuman carousals and drinking-bouts which go on in town and country after the example of the princes and lords, and as it were in the highest seat of government.' 'We will first therefore,' the preacher goes on, 'deal with the devil of dress, fashion, adornment and pride, and then with the devil of gluttony and drunkenness'; 'pardon me, dear Christain friends' he adds, for using such foul names, but I can do no otherwise; for I wish to be true and to speak German and I cannot embellish foul things, things that are most highly injurious to us all, with fine-sounding names.' [1]

### 1. Dress and Fashion—Means of Embellishment—Gold and Silver Ornaments—Extravagance among the Lower Classes

Extravagance in dress and a craze for fashion beyond all measure and reason was a characteristic feature of

[1] *Ein christlich Predigt wider das unmässig Schmücken, Prassen und Vollsaufen* (1578) Bl. A.

the closing Middle Ages,[1] and one which grew more and more pronounced in the course of the sixteenth century, maintaining an inverse relation to the declining prosperity of the land.[2] In the first decades after the outbreak of the religious disturbances, it certainly seemed as if 'greater modesty and decorum in dress were coming in'; very soon, however, morality preachers had to complain that 'from their own observation they could see that grandeur and shamelessness in dress were increasing from year to year, and that the fashions were more capricious and expensive than ever before; and that the craze for everything foreign was also increasing.'[3] 'Nearly all nations and countries,' wrote Joachim Westphal in 1565, 'keep to their own special costume and form of dress, so that one can say: that is a Polish, that a Bohemian, that a Hungarian or Spanish costume. We Germans, however, have nothing definite, but mix everything together; Italian, French, Slav and almost Turkish fashions; if people were to judge only by our clothes they would not know what to make of us, or what nation we belonged to.'[4] 'It is, alas! well known' said the Meissen Superintendent Gregory Strigenicius, 'that with Italian clothes and

[1] See our remarks vol. ii. 62–70.

[2] Steinhausen, *Gesch. des deutschen Briefes*, ii. 3: 'Luxury and extravagance, against which dress and wedding ordinances and other bye-laws waged incessant warfare after the second half of the sixteenth century, were a characteristic feature of this period. Brilliancy and display are not signs of great well-being, but the accompaniment of a universal mania. The misery of the Thirty Years' War could not eradicate this spirit. Luxury, despite all the numberless ordinances against it, flourished more and more; the decline of agriculture necessitated the semblance at least of prosperity.'

[3] *Predig wider den ubermässigen und unverschämten Kleiderschmuck* (1542) Bl. A.

[4] *Der Hoffartsteufel*, Bl. B 7.

French fashions all sorts of Italian and French ways and morals and numbers of foreign words are brought to Germany. It is a bad sign when the customary dress of the land is given up and foreign costumes adopted; and it is to be feared that the nations we imitate in dress will one day possess themselves of Germany.' [1]

Concerning the incessant changes of fashion Joachim Westphal said in 1565: 'Who could or would recount all the manifold wonderful and eccentric shapes and styles in dress, both for ladies and gentlemen and the common people, which have come in and gone out during the last thirty years, all the varieties in the chains, cloaks, mantles, furs, ruffles, gowns, caps, collars, hats, boots, jackets, petticoats, doublets, capes, stomachers, hose, shoes, slippers, firearms, powder flasks, and so forth? We have had to be in turn Polish, Bohemian, Hungarian, Turkish, French, Italian, English or devilish, Nuremburgist, Brunswickian, Franconian or Saxon; and every size and style have had their run: short, long, narrow, wide, plain, plaited, braided, corded, wadded, gallooned, with fringes, with tags, with rags, whole or slashed up, lined and unlined, with sleeves, without sleeves; with foolish headgear party-coloured, crumpled, pointed,

[1] Strigenicius, *Jonas*, 384. (** See also the complaints of the Augustinian Joh. Hoffmeister in Paulus, *Hoffmeister*, 361 ff.). With the evidence of contemporaries Julius Lessing is not in agreement when he says in his article 'Der Modeteufel' (Berlin, 1884): 'We regard the grave, decorous dress of the Reformation period as a faithful expression of this age of manly, vigorous striving' (p. 9). Far more appropriate to this period was the exclamation of Moscherosch († 1669), in *Philander von Sittewald*: 'Come hither! you call yourself a German! Your whole get-up would tell quite another tale. No sooner does a senseless Italian fashion come up, than you ill-advised apes must instantly imitate it, even though it should vary every three months.'

blunt, with or without tassels and tufts; then it had to be of leather, felt, cloth or linen, of all stuff and forms without end or measure. At one moment is worn the Swiss cut, the next moment the cross-cut, then a peacock-tail is cut in the hose, and this produces such a scandalous and abominable result, that a pious heart must be horrified at it. For no thief on the gallows can dangle backwards and forwards, and look more ragged and tattered than the present-day hose of the swashbucklers and grandees. Fie for shame.' [1]

The garment here alluded to, the most ridiculous of all fashion's vagaries, and the plainest token of a demoralised period was the trunkhose which came into vogue, in the Protestant district especially, after the middle of the sixteenth century. 'At this time,' writes Oldecop in his Annals of the year 1555, 'the great trousers came in.' 'Schlodder' or slashed hose were made with 6 ells of English cloth and 99 ells of Karteke drawn through great slits that were cut in the thicker material, which only came down to the knee; the thinner stuff, drawn through the slits hung down to the feet in folds and plaits. A very thin silk material, Kartek or Arras, was used for this purpose, and as much as 30 or 50 ells were often needed, so that the 'Pluderhose' was often a very expensive article of apparel. It was an invention of the Landsknechts who were at the head of the fashion and dress movement. According to a Nuremberg chronicle the 'Pluderhose' was first introduced in 1553 in the camp of the Elector Maurice of Magdeburg.[2] Hans Sachs, in

[1] *Hoffartsteufel, l. c.*

[2] Falke, *Deutsche Trachten- und Modenwelt*, ii. 45 ff. Falke, *Zur Kultur und Kunst* (Vienna, 1878) p. 129 ff. ** The passage from Oldecop's

1537, makes Beelzebub say to Lucifer concerning the Landsknechts :

More savage folk you cannot find,
Their clothes are of the wildest kind,
Slashed, hacked and cut in strangest guise,
Part of their legs they do expose,
The other part has great wide hose
Hanging right down to their toes.
In short their whole form is most evil
Just like old pictures of the devil. [1]

In a folk song reprinted from a lampoon of 1555 it says :

To him who wants to know
The latest curiosity,
The soldiers folk can show
A hideous atrocity.
Hosen they make now
Down to the ankle-bones I vow,
They hang as big as a calf's head,
And silk withouten bounds.
No money 's spared thereon,
E'en should they begging go.
Ye nobles, lords and princes,
These evils take to heart,
To rid us of these vices
Do each of you his part;
For God will reckon with you,
He 's given you the power,
Break down the wicked, for right quickly
Comes God's judgment hour. [2]

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*Chronicle* is now printed in the original text in the edition of Euling, 384 ff. Oldecop is pleased to regard this shameless and costly garment as an outgrowth of misapplied evangelical freedom, and to make Luther directly responsible for it. 'Now I know full well,' he writes, 'whence this devil with his vanity has come, for at the beginning of this "freedom" I was at Wittenberg, and for more than a year, and I bear witness before God, and will stand by it, that the seed, birth and whole progeny of this Hose-devil has come from nowhere else than from the doctrine of Dr. Martin Luther at Wittenberg' (p. 386 of the edition of Euling). Cf. also Lau, *Buch Weinsberg*, iv. 257.

[1] *Hans Sachs*, published by A. v. Keller, v. 123.

[2] Uhland, *Alte hoch- und niederdeutsche Volkslieder*, i. 525–531; cf. ii. 1020 to No. 192.

Some of the princes certainly did try to put a stop to this 'devilish attire.' Joachim II. of Brandenburg, for instance, soundly punished the wearers of it. One man who figured about the streets in 'Pluderhose,' and, to make himself more conspicuous still, had a musician playing the fiddle in front of him, was by Joachim's orders confined for three days in a prison, through the bars of which he was on view to the public, and the fiddler was made to play before him all day long. Another time Joachim punished a nobleman who went to church on Sunday in grand 'Pluderhose,' by having the girth of his hose cut away, so that the whole mass of toggery fell to the ground and the nobleman, in this humiliating plight, was obliged to hurry home amid the laughter of the people. Andreas Musculus, the superintendent-general of the Middlemark, published in 1555 his 'Vermahnung und Warnung vom zerluderten, zucht- und ehrverwegenen pludrigten Hosenteufel,'[1] in which he demonstrated that all those, be

[1] See Osborn, *Teufelsliteratur*, 98 ff. Osborn brought out at Halle, in 1894 a new edition of Musculus's *Hosenteufel*. 'The incentive to this publication' says W. Kawerau in the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1895, Beil. No. 212, 'is not without its comic side. On a certain Sunday in 1555 at Frankfort, on-the-Oder, the Dean of the Oberkirche, Licentiate Melchior Dreger, had preached an edifying sermon against "Pluderhosen," and earnestly admonished his hearers to abstain from this iniquitous fashion. When he again mounted the pulpit the following Sunday, behold—oh, horror of horrors!—just in front of him, hanging high up on a pillar, he saw a pair of the anathematised trousers which some rascal, presumably a student, had taken great trouble to fix up. Musculus, the superintendent-general, and also professor at the Frankfort university, whose whole existence was battle and strife, was not the man to let such an offence pass unnoticed; on the contrary, he set heaven and earth in motion to find out the delinquent and deliver him up to the justice. As, however, all his efforts were futile, on the day of the Assumption he himself mounted the pulpit and with the whole fury of his vigorous polemics he thundered against the 'zerluderte, zucht- und ehrerwegene, Pluderichte Hosenteufel,' whereby he added this new special devil to the Lutheran Devil's literature of that

they Landsknechts, nobles, people of the court, or even of still higher rank, who dressed in such abominable devil's hose, were sworn and abject lieges of the nethermost depths of hell. 'These new hose-devils' he said 'were the cause that the enemies of the gospel blasphemed against it and declared that whatever people might sing, say or write about the new doctrine, it was not possible that it came from God.' 'A Christian,' he goes on, 'might well wonder and ask himself what could be the reason why such clothing was not made and worn by any but by Christians, and why it should be nowhere so common and terrible as in those very lands and towns in which God had poured out His grace, and had caused His precious Word and pure doctrine to be preached. For if any one had the desire, out of curiosity, to see these said "Pluderhosen" in all their horror and profusion, he must not seek for them under the papacy, but must go into the towns and countries which were now called Lutheran and evangelical: there he would see them in plenty, and his heart would be sad within him, and he would be appalled and horrified as at the most gruesome sea-prodigy.'[1]

Other preachers inveighed in similar style against this fashion, and gave accounts in special publications of all sorts of portents, and tokens which were evidence of God's displeasure at these 'Pluderhosen.' For instance, a child was born with 'Pluderhose,' and ruffs round its neck and wrists; the devil boxed the ears of a painter who had portrayed him in 'Pluderhose.'[2] But

period' (For the rest of this note readers are referred to the German, vol. viii. p. 252, n. 2 [thirteenth and fourteenth editions]).

[1] In the *Theatrum Diabolorum*, 'Der Hosenteufel,' 433.

[2] See Moehsen, 497–499. Cf. Spieker, *Andreas Musculus*, 166–175.

** See also Bartsch, *Sächsische Kleiderordnungen*, 20.

in spite of all warnings and admonitions the new fashion gained the upper hand among artisans,[1] shop-people, councils, and even penetrated among the highest classes. 'All nations,' wrote Musculus, 'Italians, Spaniards, Frenchmen, Poles, Hungarians, Tartars, Turks, wear the same kind of clothes and coverings for their bodies that have come down to them from their parents. Germany alone has become so possessed by the shameless demon of dress, that there is nowadays less modesty, decorum and discretion among us Germans than in the Venusberg, although we all boast of our respectability and morality: but we haven't as much of these commodities as a fly could carry away on its tail.'[2]

The ruling authorities could not stop this fashion,[3] but they endeavoured at least in their 'Dress ordinances' to reduce the quantity of the costly material that was used for drawing through the slits. The Council of Brunswick in 1579 fixed 12 ells of silk as the allowance for the burghers; the Council of

[1] ** Among students also, and even among school boys. At Wittenberg things went so far that the students, owing to the 'Pluderhose' (the purchase of which sometimes swallowed up the yearly revenue of a village), could no longer pay their college fees. In 1580 the government ordered the bursars of the Leipzig university not to wear anything slashed, whether the silk were above or beneath the article of clothing. The school ordinance of the same year decreed that 'The boys were not to be dressed like Landsknechts, but were to be respectably clothed in such apparel as is customary among pious, honourable people; and the masters must not allow any of them to wear 'slashed Bloderhose, plumed hats, great full sack sleeves, slashed shoes, and so forth.'—Bartsch, *l. c.*

[2] *Theatrum Diabolorum*, 432[b].

[3] ** In 1565 Count John of Nassau forbade the wearing of the 'abominable long, bagging "Pluderhose" on pain of imprisonment and a money fine'; the tailors who made such garments were to be punished in like manner; Achenbach, *Gesch. der Stadt Siegen von* 1530–1560, p. 14. In Nuremberg a man in 'Pluderhose' was hung on the gallows as a warning to others.

Magdeburg, in 1583, allowed 18 ells of Kartek at the utmost, but this quantity was only for the mayors, the patricians and the well-to-do members of the community; the Council of Rostock in 1585 allowed 12–14 ells of silk, but only for the nobles.[1]

Besides the 'Pluderhose' the 'Gänsebauch' (goose stomach) was another of the most abominable articles of male apparel: 'a great hanging belly,' wrote Kirchhof in 1601, 'which the tailors stuff out with wadding, a disgraceful object.'[2] In 1586 Lucas Osiander had already preached against 'the horrible, long, stuffed out goose-bellies, which start from just below the throat and hang down a long way below the girdle, as a balcony hangs from a house.' To be specially grand the pouch was overlaid with strips of silk, velvet or gold material, or hung on with gold and silver cords.[3] 'And who could tell of all the luxury and extravagance which the greater number of men, young and old, indulge in?' 'Round their hats they wear gold bands with clasps and rings, like women's girdles. Their hair must all be roughed up like an angry sow's, and behind it is all ragged and jagged as if a young kitten had been scratching at it. They look for all the world like a Polish peasant creeping out of his straw in the morning. Then, too, they sport women's ruffles and hang gold chains round their throats. Their sleeves are so big and sausagey that they look like ammunition bags.' 'The sleeves are so large and wide that the arm can scarcely carry them. Many people hide all their goods and chattels in them, as that prince said to his councillor: "I take it you have all your manorial property hidden in our sleeves!" These

[1] Falke, *Deutsche Trachtenwelt*, ii. 49. [2] Wendunmuth, ii. 200.
[3] Falke, ii. 124. Cf. Strauss, *Kleider-Pausteufel*, 24–30.

sleeves are gathered in at the wrist so as to form grooves.'[1]

'If we were to dress up the prodigal son,' wrote Caspar Stiller at Freistadt, 'during his period of riotous living according to the present fashion of our country, we should have to say of him that he wore a silk mantle, had a rough shock head with a fine plumed hat, and a pearl circlet, a short velvet doublet and large Lyons trousers, a beautiful ruff or collar of costly cambric, rings on his fingers, bracelets on his arms, a fine gold chain round his waist, a sharp rapier at his side, silk stockings, a wealth of thick-tasselled knee-bands, polished Cordova leather shoes, and velvet slippers over them.' 'He also always carried some sweet scent about him, a wreath of flowers on his hat, or a musk-ball in his hand: indeed he thought it necessary that all his clothes should emit a pleasant odour round about.'[2]

'Any one who wants to cut a fine dash,' says a lampoon of 1594, 'must not dress in good old German style, but in Spanish, Italian or French costume, and must also sport the manners and gestures of these nations; above all he must wear a high, pointed, cocked up felt hat, a great, broad ruff and a bristling Markolfus knot and a finely trimmed beard.'[3]

'In order to be taken for persons of distinction' says Aegidius Albertinus, 'some men wear quite long and full beards, in Greek style, others cut their beards short round the mouth, leaving only two long cat's

[1] Richard, *Licht und Schatten*, 51.

[2] Stiller, Bl. K 2ᵇ–K3, Bl. O 2.

[3] Scheible, *Schaltjahr*, iv. 131–132. ** 'The tailors' said Cyriacus Spangenberg in 1570, 'hacked and slashed up the clothes till the wearer looked as if the pigs had been eating out of him, or as if he had been hanging on the gallows for a week.'—*Ehespiegel*, 69ᵇ. See also above p. 341.

tails to pull; others shave off the whole beard like Turks, sometimes leaving two points or a tuft; others follow the French, Spanish or Italian 'marquis' fashion. 'Other coxcombs let their hair grow long, so that it hangs down over their shoulders; others again let no hair grow at all; they go about with necks bare almost down to the hips, and have themselves frequently shaved, bathed, singed, shampooed and sometimes painted; they use costly perfumes, anoint themselves with rose-water, with precious, sweet-scented balsam, musk and civet; they will often stand a whole hour before the looking-glass'; 'when my lord goes out of the house he looks more like a Spanish doll or a woman than a fine, dignified man.' [1]

The dress of women and young girls, in large towns and small ones, and also among the peasants' wives and daughters, who all imitated what they saw at princes' courts and among the nobles, was quite equal, so the

[1] Hausspolicey, Part iv. 118[b]–119. Cf. Aegidius Albertinus, *Der Welt-Tummel- und Schauplatz*, 922–923, 926. See also M. Volcius, *Predigten*, where it says (pp. 70–71), 'When they have to pay one or two hundred gulden for a cloak or some other unnecessary piece of finery they do not pity themselves in the least. But if they are asked to spend as many Batzen or Kreuzer on the poor for the love of God they think they will be ruined. Velvet and silk are no longer of any account; they must have still costlier materials such as formerly were only worn by princes, and great lords and potentates, but which are now in common use among the burghers. They are indeed at a loss to procure stuff that is expensive enough. There are numbers of conceited coxcombs who when they have got the most splendid coat that can be made, directly they see some one else wearing one like it, will have no more of it, but must forthwith order something else which nobody has got. Do not our young men stalk about in great, stuck up, terrible ruffles, which almost entirely hide their heads? Our young nobles and bachelors parade the streets with locks of dirty hair on a half-shorn head; they stilt on high heels and pointed soles like goats; the ribbons and fluffy stuff round their bodies and knees and shoes make them look like mad shaggy dogs or like pouter-pigeons.

preachers complain, to male attire in extravagance, eccentricity, immodesty and changeableness. 'Folly of this sort had indeed cropped up frequently in former times, but no one could deny that it was now growing worse and worse, and that it was all the more pernicious because the welfare and prosperity of the country, as was plainly manifest, were decreasing daily.'

'Burgher women and their young daughters,' so the accounts say, 'wear velvet hoods with trimmings of marten and ostrich feathers, and clothes made of "nesselgarn" (nettle yarn), or some quite transparent stuff. Some of them line the transparent sleeves with gold tinzel and trim their dresses with gold braid. And what shall we say of the flounced, frilled, furbelowed, puffed, ruffled, embroidered dresses, and the petticoats which nowadays must be bedizened with pearls. Nothing good can come of it, and misery and want quickly follow. 'And in order that the idiotcy of us Germans may be quite unmistakable there must also be bells in the get-up; yes, women and maidens must wear silver bells on their arms! Then, too, the fine ruffles must hang down over their hands so that they dip and drag into all the plates and dishes; and these, too, must be so transparent that, like a cobweb, they scarcely hang together. There must also be trains to drag in the mud when the women walk out. Another quite new dodge is to stiffen the trains with wire or old fig-baskets; this used to be done with felt. They also wear transparent clothes of nettle yarn and naked arms and open throats. Not less ridiculous and varied are the ways they have of doing up their hair. Natural hair counts for nothing, it must be bleached; they wear fine, thick, large, yellow tresses, borrowed or

bought. It is now a common practice for women to cut off the hair of dead people who had pretty hair, and to plait it in with their own.' 'Women also make their hair into a boar-feme: they drag their hair up over a wire frame—the sticks are drawn over and across the uprights. The hair was drawn up from the forehead and temples and the back of the neck, and it mounted spirally, with many twists and turns, up into a point, in Italian fashion. Fixed firmly in the heights with hair-pins and wire, and plaistered down with sticky stuff, the coiffure often supported a heavy weight of ornaments, pearl ropes, jewels, and other precious things.' 'Our women also nowadays procure from Italy tiny velvet hats, not meant to cover the head, but only for ornament and vanity; they are so small that they do not cover a fourth part of the head, and it looks just as if a woman had stuck an apple on her head and said: "That 's a hat."'

'Who could count up all the tons of gold that are spent on such unnecessary female toggery in a single year, in a single small town, not to speak of the large towns?' 'Think now, for God's sake, dear reader, how great must be the folly, vanity and naughtiness of these women who, merely for washing and crimping a ruffle to adorn themselves with, pay fifty Reichsthaler. Think again whence it is that so many great ladies and gentlemen come to poverty, trouble, disgrace, and disaster.'[1]

A special channel of expenditure was the fashion for long trains. At Nuremberg in the fifteenth century, a decree was issued forbidding women and girls to wear gowns 'that trailed more than a third of an ell on the

[1] Guarinoni, 67.

ground; for every gown longer than this a fine of three gulden is imposed for each day or night on which it is worn.'[1] 'Nowadays burgher women and their young daughters, even in very small towns, sometimes wear trains two ells long and much longer; and this not only as an exceptional thing at festivities, but also when walking in the streets, where they sweep up the dust and the mud.' 'Oh, you senseless women,' exclaims Aegidius Albertinus, 'is it not enough that on your heads you wear false hair, silk and gold coifs covered with pearls, high hats and enormous clumps of feathers, that you hang chains and necklaces round your throats, and girdles round your waists, and cover your arms with bracelets, your fingers with rings; is it not enough that with your large, ample hoods, your frilled, furbelowed, slashed, puffed, expansive gowns, you sail about like a majestic ship with sails outspread: must you over and above all this drag after you a tremendous tail?' 'If you walk out in the winter in the streets you sweep up the mud with this tail; if you walk out in the summer you stir up and scatter about the dust, blinding with grit the eyes of those who walk behind you; people who are not strong are sometimes made ill by all this dust; they get coughs, and they spit out and curse the women who are walking in front of them and stirring up so much dust. Oh costly trains, oh fine, fatal besoms, with which you so diligently cleanse the streets and sweep up the dust and the mud!'[2]

Another flagrant sign of corrupting vanity and luxury complained of by the preachers, one which in former times had only been in vogue among the pampered

[1] Baader, *Nürnberger Polizeiordnungen*, 99.

[2] *Hausspolizey*, Part iv. 212 ff., 228[b] ff.

ladies of the higher classes, but had now become common with the burgher women and their daughters, and even with young men and dandies, was the custom of 'rouging, of painting the eye-brows, and smearing on all sorts of false colours, which in no other country was so common among the lower orders.' 'It is supposed to produce great beauty, this painting and daubing, but in a short time it makes people look wrinkled, sallow, and ugly.'[1] 'The ingredients out of which the cosmetic is made,' writes Aegidius Albertinus, 'are unwholesome and nasty, and the mixture has a most abominable smell, as those know best who prepare it and have to do with it.' 'When the face becomes hot, the paint melts, and between the white there appear streaks of black, yellow, and blue, and these different colours make the face look ugly and horrible; sometimes the mixture actually trickles down in drops.' 'And though they may say that this only happens to people who are not adepts at the art, I say that the greatest adepts, even if they can deceive the eye, cannot deceive the nose.' 'Certainly women would consider it a great deformity and disfigurement if they had six fingers on their hands; why then do they think that a paste three fingers thick improves their faces?'[2] 'When women,' he says in another place, 'use quicksilver, fat of snakes, the dung of adders, mice, dogs and wolves, and all sorts of other disgusting, stinking things (which for very shame I cannot mention) for their cosmetics, and smear their foreheads, eyes, cheeks and lips with this poison, it gives them for a while a bright-coloured, shining face, but in a short time they become all the more ugly

[1] J. Reinhold, *Predig über den unbändigen Putzteufel* (1609), p. 3.

[2] *Hausspolizey*, Part iv. 212 ff.

and old-looking, and when they are forty they look as though they were seventy.'[1] 'Meister Portius Vincentz,' published in 1593 under the title, 'Schminke für die Jungfrawen und Weiber die sich unterm Angesichte schön machen und schminken,' &c., an interesting philippic against the fashions of painting and hairdressing of that period.[2] 'Women,' wrote the preacher John Reinhold in 1609, 'regard the books which have appeared at Frankfort compiled from the works of the Italian surgeon Leonardo Fioravanti, as excellent treasuries of things hitherto unknown. They think to find in them all the secrets and mysteries of heaven knows what hidden medicines, and to learn how to preserve their beauty: they buy these writings at great cost as though they were the revelation of God and priceless treasures.'[3] To the number of these writings belonged a publication which appeared at Frankfort in 1604, a 'Kompendium der sekreten Geheimnisse und verborgenen Künste,' the fourth book of which dealt with all 'sorts of cosmetics which women are in the habit of applying to their faces and breasts.' 'The art of cosmetics,' says this book, 'was no less thought of at that period than were medicine and surgery themselves.' Amongst other things it taught the preparation of an oil 'which would not only produce a beautiful face, but also a cheerful disposition';

[1] *Luzifer's Konigreich*, 106–107. ** Duke Henry Julius of Brunswick in one of his comedies made fun of the women who paint and daub their faces and make the image of God into a devil's mask: whereby also they injure their health and grow old and wrinkled before their time, sometimes even become quite blind.—*Schauspiele des Herzogs Heinrich Julius*, 82.

[2] H. Hayn, *Bibliotheca Germanorum erotica* (Leipzig, 1885), p. 434.

[3] *Wider den unbändigen Putzteufel*, Predig von J. Reinhold (1609), p. 5.

another oil made 'all faces which were rubbed with it so bright and beautiful that they shone like mirrors.'[1] Amongst the hundred and more varieties of oil which the preacher Frederick Helbach described in 1605, there was also a magic oil invented by an Italian doctor: 'Whoever uses this oil every day for a month will appear to have been made young again; but whoever goes on using it for more than a year, although he be old will look like a young person again.' The much used balsam oil, also, was said to restore youth; the effects of a third oil were learnt by a famous doctor from a woman, who was a mistress of the art of beautifying or painting.'[2] 'It is also the fashion nowadays,' Reinhold says further, 'for the sake of health and beauty, as they say, to drink pearls and eat precious stones; and one hears not only of high princely and noble personages, male and female, but also of burghers' wives and daughters and young dandies and fools, even of tradespeoples' servants, who do this, if only they can raise enough money.'[3] The Strasburg doctor Gualtherus Ryff gave a recipe 'ordered by one of the old doctors,' for making a confection of precious stones. 'This concoction,' he said, 'takes away the pale, deadly complexion and makes people look blooming, gives the whole body a pleasant and delightful odour, drives far away all melancholy, sadness and dyspepsia, and also restores to strength those who are half dead.'[4]

Contemporaries were especially struck with the fact that 'vain and frivolous women practised on

[1] *Compendium, &c.* 'Translated from Italian into German on account of its manifold usefulness' (Frankfort, 1604), p. 273–327.

[2] Helbach, 92, 103–104, 111.

[3] *Wider den unbändigen Putzteufel*, p. 5.

[4] *Spiegel und Regiment der Gesundtheit* (Frankfort, without date), p. 204[b].

their quite young children the same follies which they indulged in for themselves.' 'Is it not,' they asked, 'a matter of the greatest wonder, that it is becoming more and more the fashion to bedaub little girls, and even little boys, of four to eight years old, with cosmetics, to paint and besmear them, and to carry on other frivolities with innocent childhood? Dressing them, for instance, in velvet and silk, hanging pearls and gold chains about them?'[1] In a Hamburg dress ordinance of 1583, it says: 'Whereas during the last years inordinate smartness has obtained in the dressing and adornment of children, and young boys and girls, we herewith forbid, under pain of considerable punishment, the putting of gold hoods on children's heads and dressing boys up in silk and pearls and gold.' Two years later this ordinance was renewed;[2] in 1618 there followed the enactment that 'Children under eight years shall not wear gold chains at all; from eight years and onwards they shall not wear chains that cost more than 20 gold gulden; but they must not wear such chains on their arms, and also they must not wear velvet clothes embroidered with gold or silver.'[3]

To what lengths the outlay in dress and ornaments went was especially manifest at weddings and other family gatherings.

[1] Reinhold, *l.c.* Cf. p. 370, n. 3.

[2] Voigt, *Die Hamburgischen, Hochzeits- u. Kleiderordnungen*, xvi. 47.

[3] *Zeitschr. für Hamburger Gesch.* i. 560. ** See also Bartsch, *Sächsische Kleiderordnung*, 23 ff. The above-named writer says: 'No other century carried extravagance so far in ornaments of gold, silver, pearls and precious stones as did the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth century in Germany. But Germany was by no means at the head in this respect; nevertheless the expenditure of the German people on jewellery at that period bears no comparison to that of our own day. The women especially as may be imagined, lusted after it, so that Luther in his coarse way calls them 'senseless animals who are insatiable as regards ornaments.'

'When I was a boy,' wrote the Meissen Superintendent Gregory Strigenicius in 1595, 'the young women always wore at wedding festivities silver chains, and velvet girdles with silver or gilt clasps. This was the highest ornamentation at that time. Now, however, they must all wear gold chains which go once or several times round the throat, and real silver girdles; the lace must be quite stiff, with large pearls and must be made in the most ingenious manner. People are always wanting something new and rare. Whatever is strange, foreign, Turkish, Spanish, French, is most popular. Everything must be corded, braided, crimped, plaited and wondrously embroidered. More must be spent on dress and adornment than the other household expenses of a whole year: 400 or 500 gulden more. When I was young, a father of a family could have dressed all his children for what must now be spent on one daughter only. Formerly young ladies put their wreaths on their heads, now they stick their little coronets on their foreheads, or hang them on one side, on one ear for instance, and they have to be fixed on so that they should not fall off. Round the throat they must have a great, long, thick ruffle made of the costliest cambric, which has to be starched and crimped with a hot iron, and supported with silver or other wire made especially to hold up these ruffles.' 'The sleeves must be open under the arms so that the white skin may be seen and admired. The amount of vanity that is expended on the skirts is patent to every one. These must have long trains of velvet and silk, part of which must be transparent in order that the gold and silver lining may show through. Under the trains there must be a "springer," and in this a

hoop, in order that the skirt may describe a circle, like a bell, and spread out far and wide. In these structures they roll along like beer vats; they are unable to enter or leave their pews in church.' Half in despair, Strigenicius adds: 'But go on! Who knows who will tear your finery to pieces: maybe brother Landsknecht will trim his hose and his tatters with it.'[1] 'One single expensive wedding dress,' wrote John Sommer in 1613, 'is no longer sufficient, there must be three, four, five, or six of different kinds of velvet and silk materials so that the bridegroom may dress and undress two or three times in the day. Yea, verily, three or four different coloured velvets are often used for one doublet and slashed and slit so that each one may be seen. The collars must be trimmed with pearls, and there is such splendour and smartness in the get-up of the bridegrooms that they look like the English comedians at the theatre.'[2] 'At weddings in Berlin and Cölln-on-the-Spree,' said the Elector Joachim Frederick of Brandenburg in 1604, 'they overload themselves with such an extravagant quantity of clothes and other expenses that after the weddings were over they are obliged to send their clothes to the rag fair where they scarcely got half the original price back.'[3]

Not seldom 'the cost of the wedding clothes, jewellery and other splendour, was enormously higher than the whole amount of the marriage portion. Thus, for instance, the Frankfort publisher Sigmund Feyerabend, in 1589, gave his daughter a dowry of 600 florins, while he spent 1000 florins on the wedding.'[4] When Lucas Geizkofler, in 1588, married the

[1] Strigenicius, *Diluvium*, 64–66. [2] Olorinus Variscus, 'Geldtklage,' 472.
[3] Mylius, i. Part 1, 78. [4] Pallmann, 63.

daughter of an Augsburg patrician, 2000 gulden were settled on him out of the paternal and maternal dowry of the bride, to set against which he gave his bride 2000 gulden and moreover, as a 'morning-present,' 500 gulden. In this exchange of liberalities—dot and home-bringing of the bride, counter-dot and morning-gift of the bridegroom—the bridegroom's presents to his bride were: two gold chains, one of which went nine times round the throat, an emerald ring and a gold coif trimmed with pearls; two signet rings with rubies and diamonds, one ring with sapphires, a gold bracelet and a pair of bracelets with *Gesundsteine* (health stones); a piece of satin, a piece of 'canasas,' and a piece of damask. The relations, too, received handsome presents in jewellery and costly materials. According to an exact calculation which Geizkofler made, the nuptial expenses, including the entertaining of the guests, amounted to 326 gulden 39 kreuzer for the betrothal ceremonies, and for the wedding itself 5873 gulden 37 kreuzer.[1] The wedding of the Leipzig doctor Jonas Möstel in 1618, was considered highly punishable for its extravagant costliness by the Elector of Saxony. The doctor took his departure with no less than 124 horses. He himself rode a brown nag with costly trappings; the horse's bit and bridle, and the rider's spurs and sword were gilded, the saddle had a velvet covering worked and braided with gold and with black silk let in: he wore a suit of brown silk satin, on his hat was a plume of feathers and a jewelled ornament, and the horse also had feathers on his head and tail. At the church service the bridegroom wore 'a fine, black velvet suit, the

[1] Wolf, *Lukas Geizkofler*, 145–149.

sleeves of which were made of gold pieces, and a mantle of black cloth lined with velvet the colour of his suit and embroidered with strips of black satin appliqué.' The bride wore 'a brown velvet gown with six rows of wide gold braid and a pearl necklace with pendant.' [1]

Still greater pomp was displayed by the Bunzlau burgomaster Namsler at his wedding in 1614. The bridesmaid wore in her artistically dressed hair a complete and wonderful flower-garden, in which were 252 choice flowers with leaves and stalks painted just like nature. Large chandeliers hung from her ears, and round her throat was a great gold chain with diamond loops and lockets; from her bosom there ascended to the height of an ell a lace ruffle stiffened with wire, sewn all over with gold spangles and edged with gold lace; her head was quite hidden in it. Her rose gown was distended by a hoop; its train, twice the length of the garment, was edged with broad gold lace; from stiffened slits in the sleeve there flowed triple rivers of lace; on the golden stomacher there bloomed a whole garden of gay silk flowers; her white gauntlet-gloves, embroidered with gold, had no fingers, and they left exposed to view the bright rings on the beautiful hands, which played now with the gold watch hanging on the left breast, now with the three-quarter-ell long fan-mirror. The partition line between the bosom and the mountain of the 'hoop' skirt was formed by a girdle tied round the waist. The stockings were white silk with gold clocks. The whole structure with all its rich and massive load, swayed backwards and forwards on a pair of high-heeled shoes of red silk stuff with pointed toes

[1] Weber, *Aus vier Jahrhunderten*, new series, i. 57–63.

nearly half a foot long, and white heels of very great height.'[1]

The magnificence of the wedding presents was in keeping with that of the festivities. At the wedding of the chamberlain of the Elector of Mayence, Matthis Kreydt, in 1603, there were among the presents a gold pocal, sixteen gilt beakers, two of which were very large and worth 100 florins apiece, and all sorts of silver articles to the value of 1000 florins.[2]

In a dress ordinance of 1530 leave was given to merchants and tradesmen to wear gold rings, and to their wives to wear girdles of the value of twenty gulden, and neck ornaments of the same value; their daughters and maids were allowed to wear hair bands, but these were not to exceed ten gulden; the wives of councillors and patricians might wear a chain worth fifty and a girdle worth thirty gulden. But this 'ordinance of the empire and others issued later on, came so little into effect that little by little their regulations were exceeded fourfold and fivefold, as was shown by numerous burgher ordinances of the towns. The council of Weissenfels was obliged in 1598 to forbid the burghers to wear chains above the value of fifty and bracelets above that of twelve gold gulden.[3] In Hamburg, according to an edict of 1583, the gold chains of the distinguished burgher women were not to cost more than 180 gold gulden, and their best necklaces not more than 100 gold gulden; girls under fifteen were forbidden to wear gold chains at all.[4] The

[1] From the report of Matheus Ruthard, who also describes the equally costly dress of the bride and bridegroom and the whole wedding festivities in v. Ledebur, *Archiv*, iii. 166–170.

[2] *Archiv für hessische Gesch. und Altertumskunde*, ii. 652, 655.

[3] *Neue Mitteilungen*, xv. 434.

[4] Voigt, *Die hamburgischen Hochzeits- und Kleiderordnungen*, 11–12, 15.

Brunswick councillor of mines, George Engelhart Löhneiss, inveighed against excessive display of ornaments, but he said that the wives of tradesmen or shopkeepers might be allowed to wear a coif worth six thalers; they might also wear a head-band worth twenty gold gulden, and bracelets worth five gold gulden, but not more.[1]

'The highly pernicious display with silk and velvet and other costly materials which was impoverishing Germany' was, according to the statements of contemporaries, 'habitual with all classes, even among common burghers and peasants, artisans and servant-maids. The material required in Germany during one year (1597) simply for male and female headgear was reckoned to have cost from 300,000 to 400,000 gulden.' As regards the use of silk, a contract was made at the Frankfort Fair with one single merchant for a consignment of silk to the value of one and a half million.[2]

While the great folk were vying with one another in splendour and blind imitation of all that was foreign, the fashions of the period were spreading among the lower classes of society and superseding the old simple dress of servants and working people. It was impossible, so it was complained, 'to distinguish maids from their mistresses; luxury in dress had become a devouring poison with them also.' 'They wear fine gowns of velvet and silk, fine shifts with large frills, smart red

Cf. Schwarten, 'Verordnungen gegen Luxus und Kleiderpracht in Hamburg,' in the *Zeitschr. für deutsche Kulturgesch.* (year 1897), p. 67 ff. In the Styrian police ordinance of 1577, it is decreed that 'ordinary burghers may wear two rings, with or without precious stones, but not above the value of ten gulden.' The more distinguished burghers were allowed to wear cloth at two gulden per ell, and ornaments to the value of thirty gulden.—Mayer, *Gesch. der Steiermark*, p. 282.

[1] Löhneiss, 281. [2] Goldast, *Politische Reichshändel*, 555.

boots of Russian leather, shoes with white heels, velvet girdles, silk fichus, velvet purses, expensive lace, all sorts of silk galloons, red, green, yellow, black, white.' When they hire themselves out to service they do not only ask for sufficient wages, 'but also for twenty-four ells of cambric, an under shift and an upper shift, a neck-collar of schamlot, a velvet ribbon, a pair of dancing shoes, a pair of red boots, a corset, two veils, a "Brabant" veil and an ordinary one.'[1] Lohneiss insisted that maid-servants should be forbidden to wear 'high scalloped, tripping and clattering shoes, and wide bagging sleeves.'[2]

'With the maid-servants the journeymen artisans were, so to say, in competition.' 'Many a poor journeyman,' wrote the preacher, Martin Bohemus, at Lauben, in the 'Oberlausitz,' 'wears silk stockings, silk breeches, a silk mantle, a silk hat, and all his clothes must be of velvet and silk. Many a servant-maid must needs mix silk in with her clothes, at the cost of a whole year's wages and of what she has got out of her mistress, in order not to be below the mark in smartness. Women disport themselves in men's clothes and men in women's clothes, which God has expressly forbidden as a great piece of wantonness.'[3]

Preacher Andreas Schoppius, of Wernigerode, said that 'the daughters of poor town or country people and

[1] Reinhold, Bl. 4. 'Der Tanzteufel,' in the *Theatrum Diabolorum*, 222-223. In Jost Amman's *Im Frauenzimmer wird vermeldt von allerlei schönen Kleidungen, &c.* (Frankfort-on-the-Maine, 1586) there are two pictures of Frankfort maid-servants:

> According to old use they wear
> Rough hoods of felt upon their hair.

When a maid-servant goes to church she carries her stool and her mantle on her arm.'

[2] Löhneiss, 281.

[3] Bohemus, i. 777, 782.

maid-servants adorned themselves in a style which a few years ago would have been too good for the nobility.'[1]

In Hesse, in 1610, Hartmann Braun, pastor at Grünberg, complained that, 'Poor day labourers wear silk and velvet. Maid-servants who barely earn three gulden in the year must go about in elegant slippers, have high-heeled shoes, and wear gowns with seven or nine strips of ribbon sewn round the bottom.[2] Aegidius Albertinus inveighed against the female servant class for wearing trains like the great ladies.[3] 'The artisans,' M. Volcius complains in his sermons,[4] 'go about in velvet and silk, and their wives wear costly clothes trimmed and hung about with silver and jewellery, as though they belonged to the nobility. . . . Formerly an artisan bought himself one outfit of common stuff for two or three florins, which was respectable-looking and suitable to his station: now he pays as much for cords and braids to trim his coat, or to the tailor for making it.' 'Why then need we ask whence come poverty and high prices, and why there is no money among the people? This godless, devilish, inordinate vanity consumes and devours all the money and is the reason that everything is as dear as possible; and God will inevitably punish such scandalous pride.'

That the morality preachers in their descriptions of 'extravagant luxury in dress among servants, artisans, journeymen and suchlike' did not lay the colours on too thick, is shown by the regulations for expenditure issued by princes and municipal authorities.

In a dress ordinance of the Elector of Saxony in 1550,

[1] *Triumphus muliebris*, 63.

[2] Niedners, *Zeitschr. für histor. Theologie*, 44, 436.

[3] *Hausspolizey*, Part 4, 229.

[4] *Sechs schöne Predigten* (1615), 71.

artisans were altogether forbidden to wear velvet, satin, double taffeta and other expensive silk stuffs, gold chains, bracelets, rings; all servants, male and female, were forbidden to wear silk and velvet, gold and silver, foreign cloths, and smart trains; especially hoops, and gold wreaths; also gold guldens, gold beads round their arms and other bracelets; similarly common apprentice lads were not to wear ostrich or other feathers of all sorts of colours, &c., &c.[1]

In 1551, the Estates of the Oberlausitz decreed that 'working men and day labourers in the country and the towns must not wear any gold, silver or pearls, or silk laces, nor embroidered collars to their shirts, and no feathers of ostriches or other foreign birds, no silk hose bands, or cut-down shoes, or birettas; their wives and children must give up collars, veils with gold borders, gold, silver or silk girdles, all gold, silver, pearl ornaments, and all silk attire.[2] In an edict issued for Berlin and Cölln-on-the-Spree the Elector Joachim Frederick, of Brandenburg, said in 1604: 'All who see the present-day fashion of smartness in dress among people of all sorts, men, women and girls, artisans, and especially maid-servants in these two towns, and compare the dress of to-day with that which was formerly customary here, must own with surprise that vainty and pride have risen beyond everybody's means and are still continually increasing, especially among women, who almost every month appear in a fresh costume, which they have either adopted or themselves originated, and none will be behind the other in this respect, however poor and needy they may be.' 'Maid-servants nowadays strut about so proudly and smartly dressed that one can

[1] Cf. Richard, 64–65. [2] *Codex Augusteus*, ii. Part 3, 85.

scarcely see any difference between them and the families of burghers.' Accordingly he decreed that henceforth maid-servants must be forbidden, under penalty of a fine, to wear any silk clothes, still less clothes trimmed with velvet, or to put any gold braids or cords on their heads.[1] In the little town of Hainau the day labourers and hand workers, together with their wives and children and the maid-servants, loaded themselves with all sorts of finery and frippery.' 'Many of them,' said the council of the town in 1598, 'spend all their wages on these senseless vanities, thus rushing through all that they earn and very soon coming to beggary.' The council therefore strictly prohibited, for the future, the wearing by working people of the costly, fanciful apparel of the higher classes; maid-servants must not be allowed to hang tomfoolery round their throats and to set themselves up above their mistresses.'[2]

In the same year the council of Weissenfels issued a burgher ordinance in which, among other things, it was said: 'Servants and day labourers shall be forbidden to wear silk and velvet, gold and silver, braided and fine spun foreign or outlandish cloths, smart braids, trains to their gowns and petticoats, hoops and every

[1] Mylius, v. part 1, 78–80. Cf. the ordinance of 1580 in Mylius, v. abt. 1, 70. The ordinance of 1604, which laid down laws for individual classes in general, and aimed at reducing extravagance in expenditure, was issued by the Elector in 1600, but kept back for four years by the magistrates on account of the difficulty of enforcing such rules. When at last, at the urgent insistence of the Elector, it was ratified and published in 1604, it could not be carried into effect, 'because the inhabitants, especially the traders, set themselves against it.'—Fidicin, v. 502.

[2] v. Ledebur, *Archiv*, iii. 184–185. Simultaneously the council decreed that 'Going about with naked breasts exposed to view is most earnestly forbidden to women and young girls.' 'The fashion of men and women greeting each other with kissing was also forbidden,' p. 179, 180.

kind of bracelet. Journeymen artisans are not to wear silk stockings and large, long ostrich feathers.' [1]

In the large towns still greater expenditure was met with. For instance, in 1568, the council of Nuremberg forbade maid-servants among other things to wear fillets and pearls in their hair, to trim their gowns and petticoats with velvet and silk, and to wear lace.[2] The council of Hamburg insisted in the years 1583 and 1585 that 'maids, nurses and other servant women should not wear stomachers, petticoats or gowns of cochenil or other such bright colours; also no pearls, or gold ornaments, no hoops round their clothes, no high-heeled pointed slippers or shoes, &c., &c.' [3] In an ordinance of 1618 the Hamburg council forbade all artisans and merchants' employés to wear 'velvet, caffar, satin or damask doublets, hose, or sleeves, gloves of pearls or gold, also gold seams on their gloves, and gold and silver cords on their clothes, and also silk stockings'; their wives were henceforth not to wear velvet, caffar, satin or gold and silver braid on their gowns; their pearl necklaces were not to be above the value of 100 marks.[4]

'The same luxury and extravagance in dress and jewellery which prevailed in the towns, great and small, is found,' says a publication entitled 'Putzteufel' (demon of dress), 'almost in all parts of the empire, and also among the common peasant folk, notwithstanding that their poverty goes on increasing, and that the number of quite destitute among them grows

[1] *Neue Mitteilungen*, xv. 435. [2] Siebenkees, i. 98–100.

[3] Voigt, *Die hamburgischen Hochzeits- u. Kleiderordnungen*, xvii. 47–48.

[4] *Zeitschr. für Hamburger Gesch.*, i. 561–562.

larger every year; of the little they have they persist in spending one part on clothes and finery, the other on eating and drinking. One may hear them say: Why should I stint? I would rather spend what I have on myself, my wife and children, cut a dash with it or else pour it down my throat, than give it to the princes and nobles in taxes, which have come to be so exorbitant and which drain our life-blood.' John Mathesius, however, gave the peasants food for thought respecting the burden with which they were oppressed: 'When peasants' he said, 'insist on dressing in gold and velvet, the old saying is verified, 'Weidenkopf und einen solcher stolzen Bauern muss man in drei Jahren einmal behauen.' (the top of the willow tree and such proud peasants must be cut down once every three years). And who knows but that the great taxes come from this, that peasants and their daughters dress nowadays like poor countesses.'[1] Zacharias Poleus, of Frankenstein, in a tragedy of 1603, makes two peasants discuss together the wretched condition of their class: amongst other things usury had become so great that 12 per cent., besides presents, was exacted from the peasants; the chief fault of this, however was the extravagance in dress which prevailed among themselves. Nowadays when a peasant woman married she must 'have everything very grand':

Whate'er new-fangled dress she sees
That she must have at once, and she 's
No whit ashamed of wearing it
Though for her class it is not fit,
Nor is a peasant now contented
Unless her clothes are ornamented

[1] *Bergpostilla*, 45.

Sumptuously, in every place,
With silken cords and velvet lace,
Embroidered collars now they dare
Like rich and noble folk to wear;
Nay, velvet is too poor and mean
For servant-maids to-day I ween;
Something finer they must get,
With pearls and gold and silver set.

Our forefathers knew nothing of this finery, but were quite content with a suit of simple cloth or linen.

But nowadays when money's paid
To farmer's man or servant-maid,
Straight they go and spend their wages
On clothing fit for lords and ladies.
Silk and velvet they must wear,
Nothing cheaper: I do swear
No nobleman in olden time
Was clad in raiment half as fine
As that in which, now, peasants shine.[1]

In an imperial police ordinance of 1530 it says: 'We hereby decree that the peasants shall not wear any gold, silver, pearls or silk, or embroidered collars to their shirts worked in gold or silk, nor any breast-cloth, ostrich feathers, silk hose bands, scalloped shoes and buckles; their wives are forbidden to wear collars of all sorts, 'Übermüder' (?) veils with gold borders, gold, silver or silk girdles, corals, paternosters, and all gold silver, pearl and silk ornamentation.'[2]

A Pomeranian provincial ordinance of 1569 further added to this decree: 'the wives, daughters and maid-servants of peasants were to abstain from wearing

[1] H. Palm, *Beiträge zur Gesch. der deutschen Literatur* (Breslau, 1877), p. 121–122.

[2] *Neue Sammlung der Reichsabschiede*, ii. 337. ** In the Styrian police ordinance of 1577 (Augsburg, Menger) the peasants were forbidden to wear gold and silver, silk stuff and furs. Mayer, *Gesch. der Steiermark*, p. 282.

slippers with gold tinsel, and also Spanish leather shoes and slippers.' [1]

'Just as the burghers in Pomerania,' wrote Kantzow, 'imitate the nobles, so the peasants will in no way be outdone by the burghers, and they now wear English and other good cloths of as fine a kind as formerly only nobles or burghers wore, and they compete with each other in dress in a way which they can very ill afford.' [2] In the villages of Bill and Ochsenwärder belonging to Hamburg the farmers and cottagers and their wives 'wear velvet and silk toggery and fringes, also silk and damask galloons, and collars trimmed with velvet.' [3] The same was the case everywhere in the north and the south. We read for instance in a Salzburg chronicle: 'Whenever a new fashion comes up in dress or anything, each one thinks he must be the first to have it; as may be seen from the peasantry round about Salzburg, both men and women, also apprentice lads and maid-servants who dress in velvet and silk, which in the old times were only worn by knights and ladies.' [4] It was 'pure truth' which the preacher Bartholomew Ringwalt in 1585 put into the following rhyme:

There 's nowadays in every land
Great taxing, and hard times at hand,
As in every class, I ween,
Is all too plainly known and seen.
Yet still each with another vies,
In pomp which lessens in no wise.
Garments slashed and slit and torn
Hacked and gashed and rift are worn,

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[1] Dähnert, iii. 817; cf. the enlarged Schäferordnung of May 16, 1616, in Dähnert, iii. 831-832.

[2] Kantzow, ii. 406-407.

[3] Voigt, *Der hamburgische Hochzeits- und Kleiderordnungen*, 27-28. *Zeitschr. für Hamburger Gesch.*, vi. 524-525.

[4] Scheible, *Kloster*, vi. 671-672.

Braided, broidered, trimmed, bedizened,
Stiff, starched ruffs of monstrous size, and
Hoops that make their skirts stick out
Like tubs, and swing and sway about.
Alas! dear God, what will betide
On earth through this gigantic pride,
Which now all German lands pervades,
Without distinction in all grades? [1]

All the orders concerning expenditure issued for the different classes by the princes and municipal authorities remained without effect. Then, as later on, the words of Lauremberg in his poem, 'Von almodischer Kleiderdracht' held good:

The laudable dress regulations
Are neither half nor wholly kept,
The high authorities' intimations
Into the rubbish-heap are swept.

The laws for expenditure only served to show the greatness and stubbornness of the evil, as well as the powerlessness of those who 'laid down laws' but who, as the preacher Reinhold admirably put it, 'themselves and in their own families cared for no laws, and who even exerted a pernicious influence in that, by their own example, they incited the lower classes to vanity and the love of pleasure.

All in vain did morality preachers point out how plainly the luxurious, extravagant mode of life now common everywhere, the passion for dress and finery, the excessive love of eating, drinking, and banqueting, betokened a lack of all higher intellectual interests, and the decline of religion and morality, and how doubly ruinous inordinate expenditure and pleasure-seeking were to a people whose outward prosperity was continually decreasing.[2]

[1] Hoffman v. Fallersleben, *B. Ringwalt*, 20–21.

[2] 'In a healthy nation luxury is itself healthy, in a sickly nation it is

## 2. Eating and Drinking—Family Festivities and Public Amusements—'Regular Banquets of Burghers and Peasants'—Wines and Beers—Brandy Drinking—Length of Life.

'When I was still young' wrote Luther, 'I remember that the majority of people, even among the rich, drank nothing but water and ate the very plainest food, and that which was easiest to obtain. Many people never tasted wine till they were thirty years old, or older. Nowadays even children are encouraged to drink wine, and not only light, ordinary wine, but the strongest foreign wines and also spirits, which they begin with the first thing in the morning. 'Drunkenness,' he adds, 'has become a common habit of the land.'[1] Similarly spoke also, in 1568, the theologian James Andreä, provost at Tübingen and Chancellor of the university: 'The vice of drunkenness has now, for the first time in the memory of man, become common everywhere; our dear forefathers under the papacy, as I have often heard old people tell, never allowed drunkards and wine bibbers to hold public posts; they were shunned and fled from at all weddings and social gatherings; street boys ran after them and marked them as useless, godless people who were not wanted anywhere: now, on the contrary, drunkenness is no

sickly. The history of any economic institution is, in small, the history of the whole people. As long as the national wealth is on the increase, consumption of goods likewise increases: decay sets in when by decreasing wealth consumption continues to grow. Then all luxury is unwise. But the economic decay of a people usually goes hand in hand with moral and political decay. Thus in decaying nations luxury as a rule is immoral.' —Roscher, *Luxus*, 51, 53.

[1] See our remarks, vol. iv. p. 150.

longer regarded as a disgrace either among high or low classes.' 'Since we have been told that fasting in the papal manner is no good work, and not pleasing to God, but wrong and sinful, we, that is the great majority of us, have as it were 'thrown away the child with the bath' (thrown away the good with the bad), and instead of fasting we have taken to gorging, sousing, swilling and banqueting, and when any one speaks to us of Christian fasting (or temperance) it sounds as if we were being admonished to become popish again.'[1]

'Those who wish to remain in favour with the people, and not fall into great disgrace,' wrote the Frankfort preacher Melchior Ambach, 'dare not punish the swinish vice; for to be tipsy and swinish is to be "merry, jovial, and good company," or to have "a good carouse or a good drink," and so forth. But when they find out that "somebody or other, in preaching, has touched this dirt" they let fly with cursing and blaspheming like maniacs.'[2] The old religionists, said another preacher, speak as follows concerning this terrible drunkenness among the evangelicals: 'Look then, are those the Christians? Are those the evangelicals? Are those the fruits of the gospel which they boast of? A fine gospel! May the devil carry off such a gospel. If it were the true gospel, very different fruits from these would follow it.'[3] 'To exonerate themselves,' said the preacher Matthew Friedrich in 1562, 'these drunken sots say that drinking little or much is not a sin because it is not forbidden in God's word. They pretend that because the actual words

[1] Döllinger, ii. 375–378.

[2] *Von Zusauffen und Trunckenheit, &c.* Frankfort on the Maine, 1543.

[3] *Theatrum Diabolorum*, 289[b].

" drink neither little nor much " are not in scripture, drunkenness is therefore not forbidden there. They say, also, I am never more fervent in prayer than when I am intoxicated. I must drink in bed; I cannot sleep unless I am drunk. St. Paul says, Be not drunk with wine, but he does not mention beer. I see everybody else drinking, what can I do? Do we not read that Noah and Lot drank themselves drunk?' In many places a strange new order was instituted which called itself the 'Sauforden' (order of drinkers) into which no one was admitted who could not drink well, eat to excess, sit up all night, endure frost and cold, and be the devil's martyrs.'[1] The Meissen Superintendent Gregory Strigenicius also speaks of this order: 'There is now amongst us here a new order, the "Sauforden" the " Centius Brothers " as they call themselves, who pledge themselves to be ready when required to help each mutually in drinking.'[2]

The preacher, John Mathesius, addressing the mine labourers at Joachimsthal in 1557, told them that 'at the swinish, epicurean and inhuman carousals and drinking-bouts they begin early in the morning, pour wine and beer into their stomachs, as into bucking tubs, and then fall to brawling, swearing and scolding as at a peasant's village feast, using bad language, and mocking the Sacraments, as I myself have witnessed

[1] *Wider den Saufteufel*, C 7, D 7 ff., K 4.

[2] Strigenicus, *Diluvium*, 624. ** Giordano Bruno, who sojourned in Germany from 1586–1591, ridiculed the Germans in his *Spaccio della bestia triomfante*, as drunkards, unscrupulous place-hunters and fawners, while in a speech which he delivered at the end of his professorship at Wittenberg, the panegyric character of which is unmistakable, he praised them as the most zealous of students. See Carrière in the *Deutsche Revue*, xv. 320 ff.

with a sorrowful heart. Moreover all the wine taverns are full, not only on holidays, but all through the week, and the mining work flags; what would happen if it stopped altogether? Women also keep beer stalls and empty jugs and glasses and roll on the table like peasants' wives. Young women are no longer content with wine sipping, but must needs learn to swill and gulp like men. And those who ought to put a stop to it gorge and drink with them.' 'With drunken rulers, at whose council-boards wine is lord and has the upper hand, there is no good management, but each one does as he likes. By gorging and swilling the body becomes heated and inflamed and Dame Venus and her company creep in, find room and welcome there, and take possession of the mad tipsy lot.' [1] Mathesius, however, did not take up a very strict standpoint. 'God,' he said, in his sermons, 'does not grudge a respectable German an honest glass; many people, like the Count Palatine Ludwig, cannot sleep without a good drink for a pillow. Many people are obliged to drink away sorrow and care. There are also many good folk who before writing, speaking, or undertaking any work, must have a good drink, as, for instance, Dr. Scheid, Bishop at Segovia. Doctor Fleck used also to have his little flask of malmsey by him in the pulpit. But this praise and defence of wine and drinking does not concern those who swill and tipple and drink themselves into a state of idiotcy, without any limit, and who, when they have no other boon-companions drink with the waggoners and servants, and go on drinking all day, turn night into day, wallow in dirt and filth like pigs, &c., &c.' [2]

[1] Mathesius, *Diluvium*, 13–16. [2] *Ibid, l. c.* Bl. 235[b]–236.

Not more edifying is the picture sketched by Andrew Pancratius, Superintendent in the Voigtland, in 1575: 'When people meet together at meals they sit on till one or two in the night, and even on until the morning.' 'What sort of conduct and life results from this swilling, is very evident in the morning'; 'we drink ourselves poor, and ill, and into hell into the bargain.' 'But what we have to complain of much more seriously is that people who on account of their position ought to maintain authority and preserve manly dignity, are themselves steeped in this vice.' [1]

From Hesse, Hartmann Braun, pastor at Grünberg, wrote in 1610 concerning the prevalent vice of drunkenness and its consequences: 'O my God, preserve us from the rowdiness and insolence of these young fellows, farm boys and others, who thus drink themselves full of wine! They shout and bellow at night in the streets like young demons from hell. They collect outside the houses of magistrates, the houses of preachers, the houses of councillors, to carry on their insolence. They hold devil's festivals in the churchyard. They chop and hack the lime trees, they throw stones at the windows; even there where the rulers and preachers are guests. They stick up pasquils and libels of all sorts on the church doors and town halls. They tear off the wheels from carriages in which people are driving, and drag them into other streets, or throw them in amongst the trees and dash them to pieces. They break open the shutters of the shops, carry the wares round the streets, and nail them up in the burghers' houses. They break the windows of honest burghers'

[1] Pancratius, 84–85, 143, 147. Cf. what he says at pp. 65–66 about young journeymen and young women.

sitting- and bed-rooms by throwing stones at them, whereby, not only are the parents and children frightened, but, if the dear God did not grant them special protection, the little children sitting at table or asleep in their cradles would be struck and killed.'

Of drink-loving preachers Braun says: 'Such an one hangs his gown on a nail, puts on a strange hat, fastens a rapier at his side, and figures round on the dancing-place; he comes with a trundle, with garden company, with topers, repeats at table a strange extract from the Pater Noster'; 'it is through such as he that the evangel gets a bad name: Eh, Eh, are these evangelical preachers, who set such examples of impropriety?' 'Drunkards make many a drinking song about their preachers; ah, God, Thou knowest how the poor preachers in the villages and towns must suffer at the wine carousals, and how many strange nicknames they carry away from them.'[1] 'Many a preacher,' said Strigenicius, 'will sit a whole night drinking till the morning and then get up into the pulpit and preach; he is full, indeed, but not with the Holy Ghost, but with strong wine, and he babbles out whatever comes into his head. Many a one is so tipsy, when he has to christen a child, that he cannot hold it, and causes all sorts of annoyance. Many of them go about uninvited into houses when meals are going on, or when they know there will be a good drinking-bout, like a St. Anthony's sow, let themselves be pelted with sweetmeats, eat and drink with the topers, no one can equal them, they can put up with anything for the sake of drink, and yet they call themselves ministers of the

[1] *St. Pauli Pfingstspruch von der leiblichen und geistigen Trunkenheit* (1610) Bl. B 2ᵇ, C 2ᵇ, D.

Word and servants of the Lord. They drink till they cannot keep their balance, and tumble down like beasts and have to be carried home. They cannot step over any ditch or puddle, but fall in and wallow like sows. It's a sight both to laugh at and grieve over. But there are numbers of them who do not care a bit if all this and more happens to them.'[1] Sigmund Evenius also thought it 'highly to be wondered at' that 'at the wedding repasts (concerning the irregularities of which an extraordinary book might be written) the preachers were always present and joined in gorging, drinking, making coarse jokes, telling wanton anecdotes, backbiting respectable people, shouting, quarrelling, fighting, stabbing, dancing, and suchlike excesses; approving and encouraging such unseemly behaviour, giving offence to the right-minded, and strengthening the debauchees and Bacchus brothers in their debauchery.'[2]

From Catholic lands complaints were no fewer of the 'gluttony and drunkenness which increased from one decade to another.' 'Respectable sobriety,' wrote the Bavarian ducal secretary Aegidius Albertinus in 1598, 'has gone out of fashion everywhere and in all classes; wholesome moderation has little place; and fuddling and wine drinking has grown into necessity and habit which cannot possibly be overcome; for those who ought to punish and put a stop to it are sick with the same disease; yea verily the law-makers are the first to become law-breakers. The one runs after the other: the noblemen follow the lords; the lords go at such a pace that the princes can scarcely keep ahead of them, or win the goal; hence it is no wonder that the subjects

[1] Strigenicius, *Diluvium*, 90[b]. [2] Evenius, 139.

do likewise.'[1] In another place Aegidius says: 'He who can drain the very biggest glasses and beakers and drink the largest "welcome," he is prince among the wine-geese; he who can sit or stand the longest and hold out the longest in drinking, that man is a brave Saxon fellow. Yea, to his eternal memory they inscribe their names in the great pocal with these words: Herr Peter Ochs, Paul Elefant, and so forth, drank this glass at one go and in one breath and gulp, so that they might well have burst their bladders. Others of the "Gänsritter" (goose knights) would have liked to figure in the Chronicle, and so they had their names and coats of arms painted in the windows or on the tables of the inns, or hung them up in the drinking rooms, in eternal memory of the fact that here they drank clean away the whole of their inheritance.'[2] Albertinus gives an appalling description of the public houses which 'not inaptly came to be called the abyss of hell.' 'The taverns and fuddling-houses are now nothing else than schools of every earthly and hellish vice, and the whole land is overrun with them, all the towns and markets crowded and almost all the streets laid waste by them. In these places night is turned into day, and day into night. Men are transformed into raging, senseless, ferocious wild beasts and hogs. If any one is in search of buffoons, backbiters, tricksters, gamblers, dicers, dancers, cursers, swearers and blasphemers, fighters, wrestlers, whores and scoundrels, let him go to the taverns where he will find a jovial crew of them.' 'Oh how many men go into the taverns fresh, joyous, and

[1] *De conviviis*, 89.

[2] *Luzifers Kōnigreich und Seelengejaidt oder Narrenhatz*, 329; cf. Schultze, 210; Scherer, *Postille*, 470.

healthy, who have to be carried out dead!' It is impossible but that people should be made ill with all the 'spurious, counterfeit adulterated drinks that are sold them:' for instance bad or mouldy wine mixed with alum or brandy, mouldy Franconian wine mixed with chub-root, wormwood, sage, &c.[1]

The custom of drinking toasts, which had come generally into vogue, and at which the opposite party had always to stand the test, drove the vice of drunkenness to the highest pitch.

'The habitual topers,' wrote the Tübingen professor John George Sigwart in 1599, 'are not satisfied with the wine which is in front of them, but fight together with drinking vessels as with spears and muskets. First the best man among them makes an attack by proposing an all-round drink. Soon afterwards he invites to a cross drink: each man challenging the man who faces him. Then drinking skirmishes take place between small parties, until at last the topers and their guests engage in formal drinking duels: man to man, or two to two. The victory rests with him who can empty half or whole a measure in one gulp, without taking breath or wiping his beard. In these contests more drink runs over the topers' beards than many poor, old, needy people set eyes on in a month. Again, if the victory rests undecided between two drinkers, these stand a wager. The one who drinks the other to the floor is the conqueror. At times presents and prizes are offered to the best drinker. In short, gambling and betting is resorted to to make the wine flow, it often comes to a point where one toper has to pour the

[1] *Luzifers Königreich*, 239-240. On life in the inns, see also Olorinus Variscus, *Geldtklage*, 189 ff.

drinks down the other's throat. And for these performances they are not content with native wine but must have strong foreign wines 'which formerly were an unheard-of luxury among ordinary people, but have now become quite common.'[1] 'It is not only at table and during the meal time that this toasting and health-drinking goes on,' says Aegidius Albertinus, 'but after they have sat hours at table and drunk long enough and hard enough, they then first begin in good earnest. Then they drink to each other one, two, three, four, five, six, ten, twelve little glasses of "St. Johannes Segen," all standing until they can stand no longer, nor walk, nor sit upright, nor talk, nor even loll about, but one here, another there, they sink down on the benches, or are thrown into carts like calves for fatting, and carried away. In this manner the drunken sots take leave of each other after having first indulged in all sorts of swinish, immoral and disgraceful practices.'[2] Aegidius makes his 'Landstörtzer' say: 'When an Englishman asked me how I liked Germany, I answered: I like it uncommonly, for they do nothing but eat and drink, sing and dance there.'[3] They drank not only out of glasses and beakers but 'they had learnt from the nobles and great lords' to use also dirty greasy bowls, jugs, cans, young ladies' shoes, felt hats, stockings, &c.'[4]

[1] Sigwart, 101–104. [2] *Luzifers Königreich*, 232–233.

[3] *Der Landstörtzer*, 289–290. Concerning the shoals of books on drinking and the art of carousing, see our remarks, vol. xii. pp. 210–216.

[4] See above p. 293 f. Fischart, *Geschichtklitterung* (edition of 1590), pp. 28, 156. Braun, *St. Pauli Pfingstspruch* (see above, 392, note), Bl. B. Guarinoni, 711. 'The little word "saufen" itself,' writes the preacher Erasmus Grüninger, 'in our German language does not mean simply drinking for necessity or for reasonable pleasure, but it means: pouring in against will and nature, and filling oneself so full of wine that it might overflow:

'Eating and drinking had become so common,' says a preacher, 'that it was not only looked upon as a special art and entertainment in itself, but was also turned into a profitable trade, and there were eating and drinking performers who went about Germany to fairs and yearly markets, showing off their skill for money, and often coming to a bad end. Once at the fair at Frankfort a professional "Eater" of this sort, who charged two pfennigs for admission to the sight, swallowed straight on end thirty eggs, a pound of cheese and a great loaf of bread; but when he attempted to repeat the performance on the same day, he fell down dead. Another of these fellows at Straubing undertook to appear on the market-place and in a quarter of an hour to swallow ten measures of "Landwein" with five measures of water in between. But he was not any the better for his feat. And young and old, little boys and little girls flock to the show, and fiendish parents take their quite tiny children to see such things; and children are actually trained to this professional eating and drinking in order to make money, so that it is time the chief magistrates looked into the matter and put a stop to such a devilish trade.'[1] Magisterial interference came at Ratisbon in 1596. A man there announced that he intended to show off his proficiency in the art of overeating by devouring twenty pounds of meat at once; but the magistrate had him turned out at the town gate, and signified to him that people should not make their living by eating but by working.[2]

As regards 'opportunities for drinking,' wrote John Sommer, preacher at Osterweddingen, 'there

possibly it comes from the Hebrew word *saba*, which means to get drunk; or *soph*, which is the same as *schöpfen* or *verschwenden* (squander).

[1] *Ein christlich Predig*, Bl. C. [2] Gumpelzhaimer, ii. 1014.

are plenty of them in Germany every month, every week, every day.' 'Not to speak of the orgies at weddings and christenings, they have now invented so many excuses for convivial gatherings that it is impossible to describe them all. Neither Christmas nor Easter, Whitsuntide or Ascension day can be kept in a Christian manner, unless Bacchus is worshipped at the same time, and perhaps more even than God, and the worship of God is turned into worship of idols performed with liquid veneration. Side by side with all these high festivals there are the special eating and drinking festivals: the harvest goose, the new wine, the last-catch the "Weimal," the welcome, the good-bye, the "Lichtbraten," the "Strafmal" (meal imposed as a fine), childbirth, business transactions of some importance, the opening of a new room, special friendly meetings, shooting match meals. In one place is kept the Wet Carnival, in others St. Martin and St. Urban are feasted with excessive drinking. The dead themselves cannot get out of the clutches of Bacchus until the surviving relatives, friends and neighbours have sung them a requiem from cans and glasses, with the juices of grape and barley oozing out of their eyes: such is their mass for the dead. What shall I say of the dinners given by the gentry on occasions of promotion? or of professors', doctors', and students' carousals? of all-night boozes?'[1] To all these occasions one might

[1] Olorinus Variscus, *Geldtklage*, 195–196. Aegidius Albertinus in like manner (217–219) counts up all the different occasions on which eating and drinking bouts were held, and designates twelve sorts of sons and daughters of the palate. 'The first son is called Dominus praeveniens or Squire Frühzeiter, for before the eaters are out of bed and dressed something to eat and drink must be taken to them.' 'The first daughter is called Frau Bibania, or the boozed maid, and must perpetually have something to drink. . . .'

apply the saying: '*Gaudeamus, glim glam gloria*, hand us a bumper, that we may vie with one another and see who drinks the most; whoever is ripe let him drop off.' 'This language is well understood by true Germans, the genuine hop-brothers, through whom it has come about—little to the credit of Germany—that other nations say "to drink freely is to Germanise."'[1] In Ruppin, at the election of new members of the council the carousals lasted full five days.[2] After the ceremonial opening of the high school at Altorf in 1575, the numerous company that took part in the proceedings sat 'ten hours long' at the farewell drinking.[3]

What seemed worst of all to serious-minded men was 'the wolfish plundering of the poor and needy,' when, for instance, on the occasion of settling accounts at hospitals 'great feasts and banquets were given at the expense of the poor-funds.' 'Might they not at such hospital banquets,' asks Guarinoni, 'give heed to the great and pitiful complaints of the poor, for whom these endowments were given, and remember how miserably they come off in spite of all the revenues provided for them, how they have to eat suet for butter, bones instead of meat, bran instead of flour? Have you not been startled by the common outcry, raised not without reason, that they have in this way

[1] *Theatrum Diabolorum*, 382.

[2] Tholuck, *Das kirchliche Leben*, 233. ** Weinsberg, iv. (published by Lau), 82–84 gives a description of an 'official repast' which the Amtsmeister gave the coopers' guild on November 15, 1589; Weinsberg adds, p. 84, 'And this is what goes on at standard dinners, marriage contracts, baptisms, wedding repasts, official repasts, funeral repasts and all such great ceremonies, not only the first day, for if there is enough food left over, the friends, neighbours and acquaintances are invited again for the second and third days.'

[3] Waldau, *Neue Beiträge*, i. 358.

deprived many hospitals of their own and indebted them for many thousands?'[1] Equally severe censure was passed by contemporaries on the almost universal custom of 'Frass der Juristen' (jurists' repast) when inventories were being made in houses after a death. 'Even as I write,' says Guarinoni in 1610, 'one of these inventories in the house of a deceased burgher has just been concluded. The assessors, guardians, assigners, notaries, &c., did not sit for more than fourteen days, and during the pauses they ate and drank in such a manner that it seemed as if that was the chief purpose for which they had come there, and whereas it was thought that there was a considerable fortune to be dealt with, in the end there was scarcely enough left for the poor legatee to pay for his yearly clothing.'[2] 'As to what goes on at the law assizes,' says another contemporary, 'in the way of eating and drinking, each town knows how to sing its own little song; above all is it known to the poor women who are condemned to be tortured as witches; for while they are suffering cruel agonies at the hands of the executioner, the gentlemen of the tribunal, and the executioner himself are heard revelling and carousing like mad. May God Almighty punish these demented wretches. The judgment-chambers themselves are often turned into drinking-rooms.'[3] At Ratisbon in 1596 the Council passed a resolution to the following effect: 'Whereas it happened a few days ago (as indeed it has often happened before), at an honourable town assizes, that in the judgment-chamber of the town

[1] Guarinoni, 786–787.

[2] *Ibid.* 782.

[3] *Ein christlich Predig*, Bl. D. For the drinking bouts during the torturing of the witches we shall bring proofs later on.

hall there was so much carousing that many of those present had to be dragged out by their arms, it is herewith forbidden to hold such inordinate revellings in the town hall or in the judgment-chamber.' [1]

'The abominable amount of eating and drinking at weddings,' was the most frequent subject of complaint. 'This habit,' says Andrew Schoppius, pastor at Wernigerode, 'is injurious to the whole country, for many a man becomes so involved in debt on account of wedding expenditure that for many years after, if not for the rest of his life, he is a poor man. A whole district might often subsist for a time on what is needlessly consumed at a wedding, yea verily, often left to spoil, and finally thrown to the cats and dogs. The ruling authorities make no laws against this, or else they do not keep to them; we preachers also, for the most part, let pass what we see of disorder, impropriety and sin at weddings, if we do not ourselves give occasion of great offence.' 'A specially bad custom has crept in here and everywhere, namely that men-servants and maid-servants, on the night before a wedding, order in a tun of beer and drink it all up, carrying on at the same time all sorts of impropriety, using

[1] *Gumpelzhaimer*, ii. 1017. ** A case in point is mentioned by Schmid in the *Histor. Jahrbuch*, xvii. 94. 'The town of Ehingen in 1398 got possession of the church treasure of Allmendingen.' The accounts of the so-called 'Liebfrauenpflege Allmendingen' (charitable foundation) for the year 1591 contains no fewer than thirty-one entries for different eating and drinking occasions; for instance, item 7 fl. 48 kr. for our meal after making up the accounts; item 5 fl. 12 kr. for wine bought in the town hall when we bought the chaplain's corn and oats; item 3 fl. 48 kr. when Ulrich Rieger paid his debt; item 3 fl. 56 kr. spent with the parson and the mayor when these made a present of fish; item 4 fl. 36 kr. spent with the Dettingen peasants; item 1 fl. 40 kr. spent when Herr von Geissingen paid a visit to Ehingen.

disgraceful language, singing ribald songs, dancing, and so forth, so that in the morning they are all tipsy; in short, they behave in an unchristian and devilish manner.'[1] The darkest picture of wedding proceedings, as they were usually carried on, is in Spangenberg's 'Ehespiegel' of 1570. 'Most of the guests,' he says, 'drink to such an extent that they can neither speak, see nor hear. . . . When the fools have drained the pots some fall asleep, others sink down in a corner, others make themselves so obnoxious by their actions and talk that they would disgrace a pig-sty.' 'The company of drinkers is swelled by players and prostitutes, jugglers, jesters, and suchlike riff-raff; these are called upon to sing their low songs and doggerel, and to carry on all sorts of fool's play so that the young people standing round may be in the highest degree disgusted. At the dancing which takes place after the banquet the proceedings are of a kind not fit for description; the young people seem to be possessed by the devil and to have lost every vestige of decency and honour.' 'And if any right-minded youths or maidens are revolted by such goings-on and refuse to dance with such disreputable devil's heads they get blows on their faces. Such villainy ought to be severely punished.' Others 'run wild about the streets and roads all night, beating drums and disturbing a whole town or hamlet with their shouting and yelling. And when they have turned everything topsy-turvy in the market place, tables, benches, &c., shoved carts and carriages into the stream and smashed them up, climbed into houses by the chimney, and smashed doors, windows,

[1] *Triumphis muliebris*, 127, 145; concerning Schoppius see our remarks vol. xii. 210 f.

tables and chairs, and done nothing but mischief till daybreak, they are mighty pleased with their performances which they think quite masterly, and expect to be praised for. It would be no wonder if God were to let the earth swallow them up.' 'And what makes it worse is that people are not satisfied with one day's jollification at weddings, but they go on for two, three or four days. How useful all this is to the country experience shows.' [1]

That Spangenberg's account was not exaggerated, is shown by the Church Ordinance of the Electorate of Saxony of 1580. In this document there are enactments against the 'very disorderly proceedings' which commonly occur at weddings in the village. Before the church service, in the house of the bride, 'improper and highly offensive doings go on, especially among the young people; also the bride's father arranges a lengthy repast, and until this is finished the preacher is kept waiting in the church; then part of the guests arrive accompanied by the bridegroom, all of them generally tipsy and reeling, while the rest, during the service, tear about the village or the churchyard screaming and bellowing.' [2]

In other districts there was just the same senseless expenditure, the same disreputable procedure. In the Schwarzwald the peasants themselves described the abuses that had come to be connected with weddings and other festive occasions, and in 1608 they appealed to the magistrates for help in remedying the evils. 'At honourable weddings,' they said in an address, 'it is the custom now, with rich and poor alike, on the morning of a wedding to flock to the house of the bride

[1] Ehespiegel, 273b–305. [2] Richter, *Kirchenordnungen*, ii. 443.

and sit down to a meal of soup, fish and roast, with wine in superfluity, of which all partake so abundantly that when they have to go to the church—for which they are often not ready till ten or eleven o'clock—they are all in such a state that the only signs of reverence they display are yelling and shouting, drawing out their pistols, knocking off hats, and all sorts of other fool's play, as if they were holding a carnival. They go on in like manner when they come out of church and make their way to the host's house, and also again during the dancing which takes place after the wedding repast. Then when they have to go back to church for the offering, they stagger about from one side to the other, &c., &c.' The peasants begged that the magistrates would put a stop to these disorderly proceedings and would settle definitely how much wine might be served at each table at the 'Morgensuppe,' and how the people were to behave in order that they might arrive in church in a properly devotional frame of mind. At later weddings, however, there was just as much insobriety and rowdyism. 'The poor impecunious people would gladly escape all this, but they cannot do so, for fear of being thought unneighbourly, and also because they are told it is an obligatory custom; and yet they have to make up for what has been so needlessly consumed by pinching themselves and their household for a whole year, and with the heavy rents, taxes and dues they have to pay, it is very difficult to recoup.'[1]

In Bavaria similar abuses prevailed. In his principality,' said Duke William V. in an ordinance of 1587, 'when there was a wedding among the common peasants there were very disorderly and offensive

[1] Gothein, *Die oberrheinische Lande*, 40 ff. to p. 15.

proceedings in the villages; when the bride was fetched from her house, all the neighbours got so drunk at the *Suppe* that they arrived at the church hallooing, shouting and yelling, and rioting most disgracefully.'[1]

Concerning weddings in the Tyrol, Guarinoni says: 'What a scandal it is on wedding days to see people sitting for six hours at table, and then tumbling about in the dancing-house and lying one upon the other in heaps: man and wife, mother and daughter, brother and sister, men-servants and maid-servants, young girls and their lovers. In one word, the goings-on at weddings are of a kind never witnessed among pagans, or Turks, or the coarsest and most shameless of nations, and strangers travelling through the land may well wonder and ask themselves whether this people does really believe in Christianity?'[2]

'The same extravagant, drunken proceedings that characterised weddings and christenings,'[3] wrote a

[1] Westenrieder, *Neue Beiträge*, i. 287.

[2] Guarinoni, 722. ** Concerning the luxury in food, drink and dress the love of pleasure and feasting among the peasantry of Styria see Peinlich, *Zur Gesch. der Leibeigenschaft*, 76 ff.

[3] ** Of the scandalous, harmful and sinful abuses at christenings, the Nuremberg patrician Berthold Holzschuher gives the following interesting description in a socio-political reform article of the year 1565: 'When the child is eight days old a "Weissat" or "Kindschenk" must be held, accompanied by eating and drinking, at which more guldens are needlessly squandered. It is a flagrant shame and disgrace that the occasion should be so unsuitably kept and so much time wasted: for to-day it is at one neighbour's, to-morrow at another's, and there is seldom a village where two or three christenings are not held every week; this is a general misfortune, for in this way the people grow poor, squander God's gifts of food and drink, waste their time, and spend it sinfully in overmuch eating, drinking, blaspheming and other iniquities,' Ehrenberg, 'Ein finanz- und sozialpolitisches Projekt aus dem 16 Jahrhundert,' in the *Zeitschr. für die gesamte Staatswissenschaft*, xlvi. (1890) 732.

preacher in 1573, 'went on at funerals, as I myself witnessed several times when 80, 100, 140, 160 even more guests were invited, and to my deep sorrow I beheld how the whole crowd of them became tipsy; fell down round the table and remained lying on the ground till they were carried away, and how at last bag-pipers, lyre-players and drummers were actually brought on the scene in order to play to the soul, as they said, and accompany it to heaven.'[1] 'The mourners,' said Sigismund Evenius, 'mostly show mourning only in their dress, without any real grief in their hearts, as is evident from the feasting that goes on in the house, where costly viands and liquors are consumed in huge quantities until deep into the night; where the nearest relatives of the departed are forced to drink to intoxication for the good of the soul.'[2]

'But what goes on in the way of drinking and swilling at the church fairs and regular carnivals' says a preacher in 1573, 'experience teaches us every year.' 'They pour liquid down their throats as down sluices, and do not stop till they have driven out their senses.'[3]

In 'Fünfzehn Kirmesspredigten' (Fifteen Church Fair Sermons), which Erasmus Winter, preacher in the Altenburg district, published in 1599, the general gluttony, drunkenness and debauchery which prevailed during the days of the church fairs are described more fully by an eye-witness. There was generally so much quarrelling, fighting and bloodshed at these times that it was commonly said: the Kirmess Ablass is a bloody head.' To attempt to punish these iniquities was like

[1] *Ein christlich Predig*, Bl. C.
[2] Evenius, 137.
[3] *Ein christlich Predig*, Bl. C.

beating the water, the sole result to bring down scorn, rating and calumny on one's own head.' [1]

If a church fair meant three or four days of desperate drinking, a 'proper' carnival often lasted five or six days, during which there was often so much fighting and wounding that the barbers (surgeons) used to say, church fairs and carnivals were the most blessed seasons of the whole year.' In an edict issued in February 1615 by the Elector John George of Saxony against the carnival mummeries at Leipzig, it says: 'At the last carnival there were horrid bands of men in abominable and scandalous dress with murderous weapons, Turkish swords and other arms, tearing about the market-place like senseless brutes, and not desisting till they had wounded each other in the skirmish and some of them had been killed.' In another Electoral edict of March 1615 the 'numerous cases of slaughter which ensued at the carnival in the capital town of Dresden' were animadverted on.[3] 'Less murderous,' but quite sufficiently disreputable,' were other carnival jollifications at which the princely festivities were imitated and all sorts of scurrilities were indulged in. Thus, of the Nuremberg carnival in 1588 the shopman, Ulrich Wirsung, wrote: 'We had also a merry pantomime, in which figured doctors, surgeons with cupping instruments and apothecaries with large syringes; in the tail of the procession which represented a dragon, there was a sick person lying at the last gasp, and two mass priests sitting by him and singing: 'St. Ursula give us wine and

[1] Winter, *Kirmesspredigten*, Bl. 9, 11, 15, 17, 30. In order to deter his congregation from such a vicious mode of life, Winter once held forth for several hours on hell and its punishments: this sermon fills thirty-six pages of print. Bl. 42[b] ff.

[2] *Ein christlich Predig*, Bl. F. [3] *Codex Augusteus*, i. 1481–1485.

receive this sick man.'[1] The mummers had dressed themselves up as negro-women, pagans, harlots, and wayfaring women, some as birds, and sea-nymphs, some as heathen princesses, shepherdesses, enchantresses, nuns, recluses, others as merry-andrews, monks, and so forth, in all sorts of costumes, one more strange than the other.' Amongst numerous other 'mummeries' there rushed in 'a wild troop of most extraordinary figures, with horns, beaks, tails, claws, humps, and behind all these on a wild, black horse came Frau Holda the wild huntress. This ferocious troop consisted of jovial drinkers and buffoons, merchants' sons, shop-keepers' servants, school-boys, and three school-masters, who let their voices be heard loud and strong.' There were also pupils of the St. Lorenz school dressed as shepherdesses who sang a song. A carnival of this sort was such a 'jovial time, that when the fools woke in the morning they were still quite tipsy, and tumbled about all day in the streets.' Next came Venusberg, very grandly got up with all the joyous court of Venus. Dame Venus sat in a cockle-shell carriage drawn by doves, surrounded by her lovely maidens, and in the midst of them all sat the noble knight Tannhäuser. 'Another procession had joined itself to the proceedings, a number of monks and nuns, who kicked up a rare hubbub; they said they were flagellators and they let fly wildly at each other so that their hoods and veils whirled round mightily; twelve priestess-cooks, jolly carnival butchers, conducted themselves very badly. We, however, set up a stage, and performed on it, briefly and well, the journeys and perils of the young Tobias.' 'When we had finished our play, we heard that a very distinguished lady, had come to

[1] Sct. Ursula, da nobis vinum et recipe aegrotum.

keep the carnival with the ladies of Nuremberg. Thinks I to myself, who can she be? Then there appeared twelve angels with great golden, fluttering wings, one of which had his name inscribed in front of him, and it was Gabriel. The people said 'the angels are the retinue of the distinguished foreign lady, the wife of the Bishop of Bamberg.' [1]

In 1540 the council of Nuremberg had a small cart constructed for carrying away the drunken people lying in the streets.[2]

In 1557 the council had to complain 'of the numerous dangerous wounds daily inflicted owing to excess of wine drinking, and also of other untoward acts committed by tipsy men and women.' [3]

'In many places this drinking went so far that the tipsy people, at princes' courts even, as was known all over the country, often remained lying dead in their places.' [4] 'The princely councillors in the duchy of Würtemberg,' it says in Scherer's postille, 'once made a list of 400 persons who, between the autumn and the first Sunday in Lent, died at banquets and carnival gatherings, as the Lutheran Manlius writes.' [5] 'In the Jahrbücher, good wine, because so many people drank themselves to death with it, was called homicide.' [6] At a public-house on the Bohemian frontier

[1] Vulpius, x. 390–407; cf. 531, where the date 1588 is given. The Bamberg bishop, Ernst von Mengerstorf, under whom nearly the whole diocese became Protestant (see F. Stieve, *Die Politik Bayerns*, ii. 387), was present at this carnival, 'enjoyed the ridicule of clerical matters, and was not particular about jokes, &c.,' pp. 395, 397, 401.

[2] Vulpius, x. 145. [3] Waldau, *Vermischte Beiträge*, iii. 253.

[4] *Ein christlich Predig* Bl. F.

[5] Scherer, *Postille*, 188. It happened between the autumn of 1540 and Lent, 1541. Cf. Volz, *Württembergische Jahrbücher*, 1852, p. 179.

[6] Arnold, i. 788.

five journeymen drank themselves to death in one night; at Cassel in June 1596, three people died in one day from drinking.[1]

'When I reflect,' wrote a preacher in 1573, 'on the drunkenness and the quite inordinate tippling and all the cursing, swearing, blaspheming, debauchery, killing, &c., which results from it, I am constrained also to blame many lords and rulers, and to say that they are in no slight measure themselves the cause of all this evil. And this not only because they themselves set a bad example in this respect to the people, but also because they actually encourage drinking by the erection of breweries, distilleries and taverns'; 'they want to sell a great deal and receive plenty of duty and excise.'[2] For the same reasons the preacher, Erasmus Sarcerius, in 1555, mentioned 'several lords and nobles, also some of the councillors in towns,' as chief promoters of the increasing love of drink.[3] In a letter from Martin Bucer to the Landgrave Philip of Hesse, on May 19, 1540, we read: 'The vice of drunkenness which has invaded the country, is seen at its worst in Marburg, for there the town councillors are wine sellers.'[4] 'Whereas drink,' said the preacher, Ludwig Milichius, 'now brings in money to the lords, no excess is so great, no revelry so drunken, no banquet so splendid, no carousal so godless, but it is connived at. Organising extravagant wedding and christening feasts, holding church fairs, drinking all night long, setting up one or two taverns in every hamlet and corner, all this is admirable because it produces plenty of excise money.'[5]

[1] Kirchhof, *Wendunmuth*, i. 269 and ii. 439.
[2] *Ein christlich Predig*, Bl. F.
[3] *Zeitsch. des Harzvereins*, xx. 524.
[4] See our remarks vol. vi. p. 91.
[5] Milichius, *Schrap-Teufell*, Bl. L.

'At the same time the lords behave very honourably, and issue laws and ordinances forbidding so much drinking and toasting, and such excessive hospitality. But what good can this do? The people laugh at it and think it a fine joke. One hears them say: "The rulers themselves are lying ill in bed and they want to cure others! Let them begin first at home."'[1]

The numerous edicts issued by princes and municipal authorities, in which, under threat of severe punishment for non-observance, minute rules were laid down for each separate class as to how much expense might be incurred at family festivities, weddings, christenings, funerals and so forth, how many guests might be invited at a time, and what sort of entertainment was to be provided, were all powerless to stem the tide of drunkenness, lasciviousness and senseless extravagance, because the legislators themselves set such a bad example to the people, and did not strike at the roots of the evil. These laws and regulations are important, however, because on the one hand, they show what in those days was understood by 'reduction of extravagance,' and on the other hand, they represent the continuous increase of luxury and expenditure.

Thus, for instance, Joachim I. of Brandenburg, in a police ordinance of 1515 for the regulation of wedding festivities, limited the number of guests to as many as could be seated at five tables in case of rich people, and at three tables for the common people, in order, as the ordinance said, that 'they should not in one day get through as much food and drink as was needed for a whole year's household consumption.' Further, wedding festivities were not to last more than two

[1] *Ein christlich Predig*, Bl. F.

days: a fine of one silver mark was to be the penalty for infringement of these regulations. Thirty-six years later, in 1551, the Elector Joachim II. issued a new ordinance, in which he decreed that 'none of the burghers or other inhabitants of towns were to invite more than 156 guests or lay more than thirteen tables, except the tables for the cooks, maids, waiters, pipers and drummers; the local guests were not to be entertained for more than three days, the foreign ones might stay longer.'[1]

According to an ordinance of the Nordhausen Council issued in 1549 the number of persons invited to a wedding was not to exceed 140, and the cook and the bridegroom had to state on oath before the council how high was the number of guests invited and what quantity of provisions had been ordered.[2] In a Greifswald wedding ordinance of 1592 artisans were limited to eighty, the higher class burghers to 120 families, foreigners, however, excepted.[3] A police ordinance of the town of Münden, in 1610, decreed that at large weddings there should not be more than twenty-four tables with ten persons at each, at small ones not more than fourteen tables.[4] Similarly a Hamburg ordinance of 1609 decreed that 'For a complete or "wine-wedding" not more than 240 persons must be invited': in the territory belonging to the town, according to a prescript of the year 1603, weddings were not to last more than three days.'[5] At Lübeck, in 1611, the burgomaster had to take proceedings against the peasants who 'kept up their weddings for four or five days and drank

[1] Moehsen, 494–495.
[2] *Neue Mitteilungen*, v. 99.
[3] *Baltische Studien*, 15 Jahrgang, Heft. ii. p. 195, 200.
[4] Spittler, *Gesch. des Fürstentums Hannover*, i. 380–381.
[5] *Zeitschr. für die Gesch. Hamburgs*, i. 547, and v. 467.

up twenty or more tuns of beer.'[1] In the Brunswick district also the common peasants entertained twenty-four tables full of guests, gave ten or twelve dishes at each meal, and drank twenty barrels of beer, if not more.[2] In Würtemberg Duke Ludwig, in 1585, made a stand against 'the inordinate drinking, banqueting, and extravagance (especially at weddings), which had gained ground among both rich and poor, so much so that even among people of low estate and small means it was a common thing to have ten, twelve, sixteen and more expensive dishes at any festive meal, especially at supplementary weddings; to have eight, nine, ten and more tables only for women "giving suck to infants," and young girls.'[3]

The cook artist Marx Rumpolt in 1581 gave a detailed account, 'from many years' experience' of the way in which 'proper burgher and peasant banquets should be given.'

For a 'Frühmahl' (early meal) at a burgher's banquet he considered the following dishes sufficient: 'First course: stewed beef with horse radish, capon-soup garnished with smoked meat and roast lights; a well-filled sucking pig, a dish of sour kraut boiled with smoked bacon and old hens. Second course: peppered pork; roast veal; a leg of mutton; roast pork; a capon, a goose, partridges, birds, a lamb or kid —these all roasted and served in one dish; dried beef with juniper berries; a dish of rice cooked in milk; boiled veal yellow with lemons; a veal jelly, sour and yellow. Third course: baked cakes, Holhippen (?), brown cakes, all sorts of biscuits, all sorts of good cheese;

[1] Brockes, ii. 10–11 note.
[2] Cf. Löhneiss, 284.
[3] Reyscher, xii. 440–444.

large and small nuts.' For a 'Frühmahl dinner on fast-days there must be served up: First course: a wine soup; boiled eggs; poached eggs, blue-boiled carps; preserved eels, yellow. Second course: spinach boiled with small raisins; baked Koppen; blue-boiled trout; Brücken in pepper; preserved pike, yellow à la Hungarian. Third course: stewed crab; stuffed stock-fish, smoked; plums; blue-boiled pike in bacon, a pike jelly. Fourth course: all sorts of fruit, biscuits, cakes and cheese.[1]

At a banquet of well-to-do peasants the following was the rule for the mid-day meal on days when flesh meat is allowed. First course: soup (the broth of cut-up beef); boiled beef, a capon and dried meat. Second course: a roast goose, a roast leg of mutton larded with sage, a roast pig, roast chickens, a roast of veal and sausages. Third course: sour kraut boiled with bacon and sausages laid round. Fourth course: old chickens preserved in jelly, yellow. Fifth course: pig-jelly (brawn). Sixth course: apples, pears, nuts, cheese, all sorts of pastry, cakes and biscuits.

At a 'Nachtmahl' (evening meal) also in six courses, the order was: 'a salad, hard-boiled eggs, sausage, slices of ham, dried meat; good chicken broth with ox flesh; a dish of all sorts of coarse roasts, a green cabbage with a smoked sucking-pig; preserved gosling in pepper, and finally all sorts of pastry, cakes and biscuits. On a fast day the peasants were satisfied for the 'Frühmahl' with pea-soup, boiled eggs, blue-boiled carps with vinegar; sour kraut with dried salmon and baked fish and roast fish on the kraut; yellow pike boiled à la Hungarian; a white jelly

[1] Rumpolt, Bl. 38, 39.

made of carps, and all sorts of pastry, cakes and biscuits, also 'Steigleder and Stetzküchlein' (?), and apples, pears, nuts and cheese.[1]

At the grand banquets and drinking bouts of persons of position, as well as at those of burghers and peasants, it was customary, besides drinking the ordinary wines, 'coarse or fine, such as God had provided, to have also artificial wines, for the preparation of which great skill and experience were needed.' These qualifications Rumpolt possessed. 'All people of high or low degree, both male and female, he taught how to make good, sweet wine, which was sweeter than fermented wine, and also purer and clearer,' also 'many costly wines of herbs, spices and other things, also spiced wines such as borage wine, ox-tongue, rosemary . . . orris, sage, wormwood, hyssop.

'Out of benevolence to mankind,' he also reports concerning all sorts of powerful, secret ways of doctoring wine, 'which a father ought scarcely to teach his children.' These must only be done in secret places so that people may not learn the secret, for this art, he says, is known to very few and for its great usefulness is worth 1000 gulden to a wine merchant or retailer, &c.[2]

'Wine-arts' of all sorts were a highly profitable business. The council of Leipzig, in 1539, found itself obliged to issue a new wine ordinance because, 'owing to the adulteration of wine, illness increased in the towns from day to day, and the doctors complained that

[1] Rumpolt, Bl. 40–41.

[2] *Ibid.* clxxxiv.–cxcvi. The preacher, Frederick Helbach, devoted a special pamphlet to dealing with all the 'medicated and herb wines,' see Helbach, *Vorrede*, A 2$^{b}$.

they could not get a drop of good pure wine for their patients.[1] The council of Cologne in 1562 was obliged to issue an injunction against 'new-fangled wines prepared with bacon, which were never heard of formerly, and which are highly injurious to health.'[2] By admixture of brandy, lime, alum and other unnatural ingredients, 'wine' wrote Aegidius Albertinus,' is terribly adulterated.'[3]

'They were also very skilful in all sorts of ways of manufacturing new kinds of beer. Amongst others they made 'rosemary beer, extremely good for melancholia'; 'scordien beer, good against poison, colic, and female troubles; lavender beer, which powerfully strengthens the head, and is also very valuable against apoplexy'; melissen beer, which strengthens the heart and the spirits, and is very wholesome and useful for women; also gilliflower beer, allspice beer, brown betonian beer, juniper beer, laurel beer, wormwood beer, and sage beer—this last removes trembling in the knee-caps and other limbs, strengthens growing teeth and makes them firm; wormwood beer is very good for women for its acts against barrenness; also pennyroyal

[1] Wassermann, *Lebensmittelfälschung*, 24–28. Richard, 199.

[2] *Zeitschr. für deutsche Kulturgesch.* (new series) vol. iii. 61–62.

[3] K. v. Reinhardstöttner in the *Jahrb. für Münchener Gesch.* ii. 48. For the different methods of adulterating and poisoning wine, see Guarinoni, 678, 682, 683, 690, 695–696. In like manner groceries and spices were often adulterated with harmful things, 'whereby, for the common people there resulted sickness, and injury.' See the Würtemberg ordinance of 1563, in Reyscher, xii. 325; the Reichspolizeiordnung of 1577 in the *Neue Sammlung der Reichsabschiede*, iii. 392; the Kurpfälzische Landesordnung of 1582, Tit. 23. For the Tyrol cf. K. Elben, *Zur Lehre von der Warenfälschung* (Freiburg, 1881,) p. 55; see also our statements, vol. ii. p. 128 f. and vol. iv. 158, and Olorinus Variscus, *Ethnogr. Mundi*, J 5.

beer, hyssop beer and other kinds were praised as very health-giving.' [1]

An especially fruitful source of evil was the increasing love of brandy drinking. The woes arising from this habit were sung in a poem of the year 1493.[2] A Nuremberg police ordinance of 1496 says: 'Many people in this town, through the drinking of brandy, are daily guilty of serious misconduct and disorder, especially on Sundays and feast-days.' From experienced doctors the council had learnt how injurious brandy was to the health, and what fatal diseases it produced, all the more so as it was distilled from substances harmful and injurious to man's constitution. Hence it was enjoined that in future no more brandy was to be sold on Sunday and on feast-days; on working-days it might be bought, but only drunk at home, and not more of it than one heller or pennyworth a day.[3] In the course of the sixteenth century the love of brandy gained ground more and more, not only in towns, but also in the country.[4] In an enactment issued by the district council at Nuremberg, in 1527, to the warden, burgomaster and council at Altorf, it was complained that many people there 'had no shame in disgracing themselves with brandy drinking and in other ways in the public streets and also in inns and taverns on Sundays and holy days whilst preaching

[1] Stengel, Bl. D. 3b—E 2.

[2] See our remarks, vol. i. (German) 454, n. 2. See also Weller's *Altes*, ii. 805–809.

[3] J. Baader, *Nürnberger Polizeiordnungen*, in the Library of the Literary Society at Stuttgart, lxiii. 264–265. ** Schultz, *Deutsches Leben*, 509.

[4] ** In 1522, in the *Trautenau Chronicle* of Simon Hüttet [published by L. Schlesinger, Prague, 1881), it is said of a schoolmaster and town clerk, that 'he drank himself to death with brandy at the "Wet King" public-house, owned by old Hans Hoffmann.'—Schultz, *Deutsches Leben*, 509.

was going on'; suitable punishment, the edict said, must be inflicted on such delinquents, because 'this inordinate drinking was productive of much offence and unchristian behaviour, with contempt and desecration of the Word of God, and other scandalous results.' In Nuremberg and its suburbs, as also in the country round, there sprang up everywhere at that time brandy distilleries which paid taxes and duties.[1] For Bavaria the Landesordnung of 1553 decreed that 'no one should drink more than two pfennigs worth of brandy per day'; as highly injurious to the common people, it was forbidden under severe penalty to make brandy out of 'wheat, barley and suchlike grain.'[2] 'The early masses,' preached the Jesuit Father, George Scherer, 'have in many places been turned into early eating and early brandy drinking.'[3] In Hesse, in 1524, a general prohibition went forth against selling and retailing brandy; but as this did not stop the 'inordinate brandy-drinking' there followed another severe ordinance in 1559, to the effect that 'no more drinking bouts were to be held either by innkeepers, or by burghers, peasants, nobles or commoners, and that brandy was only to be sold to men and women who were ill and infirm.'[4] How futile also this second ordinance was is shown by another one issued for the town of Grünberg in 1579: 'Whereas in the brandy shops great disorder goes on and much offence is given, in that not only the inhabitants of the town, but also the people who come to church from the country, drink themselves drunk before and during the service,

[1] J. Baader, 'Zur Gesch. des Branntweins,' in the *Anzeiger für Kunde der deutschen Vorzeit*, xv. 315–318.

[2] *Bayerische Landesordnung*, 97ᵃ, 98ᵇ. [3] Scherer, *Postille*, 446ᵇ.

[4] See O. Stölzel in the *Jahrbücher für Nationalökonomie*, vii. 160, 161.

while many of them stay away from church, and others go there in a state of intoxication, it is herewith decreed that henceforth brandy drinking shall not be allowed either before or during service time.'[1] 'The high authorities,' preached the Meissen Superintendent Gregory Strigenicius, 'have strictly enjoined that the disorderly traffic of brandy retailing during church service time and afterwards shall be given up. But who attends to this order? There is so much carousing that it is a sin and shame, and strange to say, it goes on chiefly in the places where there is more than one judiciary district. If one magistrate will not tolerate the practice, and it is put down by the council, the people go across the water, over the bridges, into another district where the authorities connive at it and allow all sorts of improprieties to go on during church time.'[2] In the town of Zwickau, in 1600, no less than 34 brandy distilleries are mentioned;[3] at Zittau, in 1577, the number was over 40. 'With us,' the Zittau archdeacon, Andrew Winzinger, complained, 'there is no end to gorging and drinking. If at a dinner party each guest has not drunk so much that he can neither walk nor stand, if the party has not lasted on far into the night, then it has been no proper dinner party. In this way many people drink themselves prematurely to death.' In Berlin, in 1574, brandy might still only be sold in apothecaries' shops, but already in 1595 the council was drawing a tax from brandy distilleries.[4]

[1] Glaser, 133.

[2] Strigenicius, *Diluvium*, 90[b]. According to an enactment of Duke Frederick William, in 1595, brandy was only to be distilled from wine dregs, not from corn, because otherwise the price of corn was raised too high; pigs fattened on draff caused leprosy.—*Codex Augustinus*, i. 1434–1438.

[3] Tholuck, *Das kirchliche Leben*, 235. [4] Moehsen, 488–489.

In Frankfort-on-the-Oder, in 1604, the number of these distilleries amounted to 80; they were, however, reduced to 14 by a decree of the council.[1]

John Bussleb, teacher at the Egeln school, in his comedy, 'Ein spiegel, beide wie die Eltern ihre Kinder auferziehen, auch die Kinder gegen die Eltern sich verhalten sollen' (A mirror showing both how parents should educate their children and how children should behave to their parents), impersonates brandy as a being bound over to the devil, and ascribes to it very special blame for the immorality and depravity of the time. A son who has laid violent hands on his father, and who sinks into all sorts of vice and shame, cries out in the play: 'Der Branntewein, der sol es geben!' Brandy is to blame![2] It had been noticed long ago that in consequence of the excessive eating and drinking in Germany, 'the ordinary age of man was diminishing in a surprising manner.' 'It is complained,' wrote Sebastian Franck, in 1531, 'that no one nowadays grows old. For this we have to thank the fact that we spoil more wine than our forefathers drank, and that we eat like hogs; how can nature stand it? I firmly believe that every tenth person dies no natural death. The women overeat, the men overdrink themselves.'[3] 'Ach, ach,' said another contemporary, 'it is the fault of the great drinking-bouts, that scarcely any man now reaches the age of forty, &c.'[4]

The same wail is repeated in the sermon of Erasmus

[1] *Märkische Forschungen*, iv. 332.

[2] *Zeitschr. des Harzvereins*, i. 352. Concerning prohibitions of brandy selling in the Nassau district, see Steubing, 177; for Basle and Strasburg, see Geering, 578.

[3] Von dem greulichen Laster der Trunkenheit, Bl. C. $C^3$. $F^2$.

[4] 'Der Faulteufel' in the *Theatrum Diabolorum*, 363.

Winter, published at Leipzig in 1599: 'Owing to immoderate eating and drinking there are now few old people, and we seldom see a man of thirty or forty who is not afflicted with some sort of disease, either stone, gout, cough, consumption or what not.'[1] The preacher, Erasmus Grüninger, in 1614, also bore witness to the general experience that 'owing to the godless drinking that went on, longevity in Germany was continually decreasing.' 'When people,' he said, 'have passed the age of 40 or 50 they are generally of no more use. The time when, nowadays, old age sets in, was formerly the time when people began to marry, and were at their prime. With us, at that age, people now begin to break up and go to infirmaries. When guests are so done up after a party that they have to be carried home half-dead, things have come to a pretty pass. What is going to become of us Germans when we are so hard, so merciless, so tyrannical towards our ownselves!'[2] Foreigners who visited Germany made the same observations. The Venetian Giacomo Soranzo, for instance, in 1562, ascribed the short span of life of Germans to immoderate drinking. 'Forty-seven is considered quite an advanced age in Germany,' wrote Giovanni Correr to Venice in 1574.[3] When the Margrave Hans von Küstrin became very ill in 1570, his physician wrote to the Elector Joachim II., of Brandenburg, that it 'was doubtful if he would ever recover, for he had now reached the great age of 58.'[4]

'Because we storm in upon ourselves with eating, drinking,' said the Saxon Elector's court preacher,

[1] Winter, *Encänia*, 166.
[2] Grüninger, 230-231.
[3] Albèri, *Le Relazioni degli Ambasciatori Veneti*, ser. i. vol. vi. 126, 179.
[4] *Märkische Forschungen*, xiii. 425.

Michael Niederstetter, in 1611, in his funeral sermon on Christian II., 'it is regarded as quite a miracle if nowadays anyone lives to be 70 or 80 years old.'[1] It was thought something quite extraordinary and out of the way that Count William Werner, of Zimmern, when he died in 1566, had reached the age of 81.[2] 'The majority of people,' wrote the Tyrolese doctor, Hippolytus Guarinoni, in 1610, 'do not become older than 30 or 40; out of 1000 people, male and female, scarcely one lives to 50, only one in 5000 to 60, and scarcely one in 10,000 to 70.[3] From his long years' experiences as a doctor, Guarinoni discussed with special attention 'the appalling evil of drunkenness among women and young girls and the terrible consequences resulting therefrom.'[4] In every 300 persons, he assures us, there are not 10 who do not suffer in their stomachs.[5]

[1] *Drey christliche Predigten*, Bl. B. 3[b].

[2] *Zimmerische Chronik*, iv. 197–198.

[3] Guarinoni, ii., 12. ** Long before Guarinoni, Luther had made the same statement: 'When then we have become 50 years old we have worked ourselves out, and we are children again.' 'But if I, Doctor Martin Luther, die at the age of 36, I do not believe that 60 or 100 of you will live as long, for the world does not grow old nowadays.'—*Collected Works*, vii. 255, 256. In a similar strain wrote the Protestant pastor, Nicholas Florus, in 1583: 'Our whole nature is deteriorating and losing its vigour and power. Out of thousands you scarcely find one who reaches 70 or 80 years, but we ourselves are the cause of this, with our intemperate living, eating and drinking, to which there is no end or limit. Our fathers lived much more temperately, and accordingly they attained to their natural age. But nowadays those who reach a respectable age are few in number; the majority die before they are 40; any one who lives to 50 or 60 is old in our days.'—Florus, *Auslegung des 90 Psalms* (Strasburg, 1583), K. 6, 7. See Döllinger, ii. 57.

[4] Guarinoni, 721–727; cf. 772. 'Consider, dear reader, whence it comes that nearly all young children, as well sucking infants as those just weaned, suffer in their cradles from gripes, or congenital gout, or caries, that most of them die of these complaints, murdered by their own mothers'—p. 723.

[5] Guarinoni, 817.

'In consequence of the disorderly lives which the people lead,' wrote the Augsburger Philip Hainhofer in the diary of his travels in 1617, '.we have met nothing but sick folk between Nuremberg and Berlin.' [1]

'All the world' was forced to say with Lazarus von Schwendi:

Gluttony and drunkenness have grown
To honour, and as common have become,
As though we had but these pursuits alone.
We see thereby the German nation
Sinking into degradation.
Its strength and greatness have declined,
No heroes as of old we find:
The length of days God gives to man
Is shortened by one half its span;
Of us the maxim old is true:
'Drink slays far more than warriors do.' [2]

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[1] *Baltische Studien*, ii. Heft ii. 15.

[2] 'Ermahnung an die frommen Teutschen, unlängst von seinem End gestellt.' Precisely the same was the judgment of Aegidius Albertinus: 'Far more people die from overeating than through war or the sword.' *Christi Königreich und Seelengejaid* (Munich, 1618), p. 149. Concerning gluttony and drunkenness in schools and universities, see our remarks, vol. xiii. p. 82 ff., 236, 277 f., 282 ff., 303 ff. ** Germany, says so important an historian of civilisation as Steinhausen (Die Anfänge des französischen Literatur- und Kultureinflusses in Deutschland), in the *Zeitschr. für vergleichende Literaturgesch.* (new series, 7, 1894, 361), Germany, in the second half of the sixteenth century, shows itself in a decidedly retrograde condition, politically, economically, intellectually and morally. This was felt pretty generally. Quite apart from the numbers of morality sermons, and the countless literary products, filled with complaints and warnings, this feature of the age is also otherwise manifest. In my *Geschichte des Deutschen Briefes*, vol. i. p. 181 ff., I have called attention to the melancholy views of life expressed at this period in letters from all sorts of circles, and in spite of the admission that utterances of this sort appear at all times, I still maintain that they are especially frequent at the epoch in question. The people itself is aware of its own decline. 'O Dudeslant, Dudeslant,' writes a Nether German to the council at Brunswick (*l. c.* vol. ii. p. 1), 'ick fruchte, dat Dudeslant eyne grote strafe avergan wart' (O Germany, O Germany, I fear that a great calamity is awaiting the German land).

Under such conditions, it is easy to understand, that the nation gave itself up unreservedly, not only to French, but to all foreign influences. The verses of Fischart, who himself was by no means closed against what was foreign, are well known:

Scarce anyone cares nowadays
For liberty and honour's ways;
With freedom we all trifle now,
To foreign modes and uses bow.

## CHAPTER IV

BEGGARS—POOR LAWS—ROBBERY OF THE POOR—CAUSES OF GROWING PAUPERISM—INCREASE OF BEGGARS AND VAGABONDS

As early as the first quarter of the fifteenth century the council of Basle issued a memorandum on the different methods of fraud which the crippled and the lame went about practising, especially on the Kohlenberg in front of the town.[1] With the help of the swindlers' tricks and swindlers' slang set forth in this memorandum, Sebastian Brant, in 1494, in the sixty-third section of his 'Narrenschiff,' depicted all these proceedings in vivid colours. Many men, still young and strong and able to work, he said, go about begging, and early teach their children the same trade. In order that the children may cry and scream lustily they will break one of their limbs in two or inflict wounds and hurts on them. Then again, you will see one of these impostors walking with crutches so long as he is observed, but the instant he is alone he can do without his crutches. Another one knows how to feign epilepsy; others crawl about with their bodies crumpled up and bent double; while yet others borrow a pack of children and perambulate the country with them:

[1] Avé-Lallemant, i. 122–132. ** iv. 57–58.

For, alas, there are beggars galore
And their number grows more and more,
For begging is an easy trade,
Except for those in need of aid;
Otherwise 'tis good to be
A beggar flourishing and free.
They never drink inferior wine,
Aught but good Reinfal[1] they decline.
Many a beggar drinks and plays,
Gorges and lives luxurious days;
And many a beggar 's richer far
Than either you or I, friend, are.

To this beggar class belonged also the so-called relic-bearers and 'stationers' (= pardoners), who went about with all sorts of sham relics, and who, as Brant says, never missed one of the Church fairs, at which they used to proclaim publicly how,

They carried in their sack the hay
Which of old deep buried lay
Beneath the Bethlehem manger;
A leg from Balaam's ass they bring,
A feather from St. Michael's wing,
A bridle from St. George's charger,
A 'Buntschuh' of St. Clara.[2]

In the mandate of the Basle council it is expressly said that 'certain people go about with relics and pretend that they are priests, and wear a tonsure, although they have not been ordained and are ignorant men.' 'Some of them possess a little learning, but still

[1] Wine of Rivoglia.

[2] Narrenschiff, No. 63; *Von Bettleren*; edition of Goedeke (Leipzig, 1872), p. 113–116. In the poem 'Des Teufels Netz' of the first half of the fifteenth century (published by Barack in the *Bibliothek des Literarischen Vereins*, Stuttgart, 1863), there is a vivid description (p. 201–203) of the beggars and vagrants, who cheat the people by shamming bodily infirmities and live in luxury. ** See also Schultz, *Deutsches Leben*, 227 ff. Highly interesting from the standpoint of the history of civilisation, and hitherto far too little noticed, is the description by Matthias von Kemnat of the twenty-six sorts of fraudulent beggars, with their slang names, 'Chronik Friedrichs I,' in the *Quellen zur bayerischen und deutschen Geschichte*, ii. (Munich, 1862), 101 ff.

have not been ordained, and they say that they are priests, and they have shaven crowns like priests, and they wander round about the country saying they are far from home and have come from Rome or elsewhere and have been robbed, and thus they deceive the people.'[1]

'They ought by rights to be drowned,' said Thomas Murner, in his 'Narrenbeschwörung' of 1512, 'these scoundels who pretend to be epileptics, cripples, maniacs, these impostors who pretend they are begging for holy shrines and churches, these pretended priests who have a boy to take them about, beggars and pardoners who hawk sham relics, cheat God and the whole world, obtain under false pretexts commendatory letters from the gentry, setting forth how they suffer from St. Vitus' dance and can rest nowhere; others fall to the ground with foaming mouths; others are led in chains as being possessed by the devil; others again have the power to inflict wounds, and their lies would crack a beam: they have the pardon of the saints to give for pious cash.'[2]

John Schweblin, hospital master at Pforzheim, said in a report of 1522, concerning the heavy expenses which were incurred by the 'collectors' who go about collecting money for the poor and the hospitals, on account of the papal bulls to be obtained, the equipment and board of the collectors and so forth, that out of every 1000 gulden that were collected not ten, he believed, were left over for the poor. 'For apart from these collectors we are intolerably pestered by numberless pardoners, who humbug and deceive the ignorant

[1] Avé-Lallemant, i. 128, 130.

[2] *Narrenbeschwörung*, No. 16; 'Der verloren Huf' in Goedeke's edition (1879), p. 59–63, where Murner's expressions are also explained.

people; many new churches and chapels are erected and every one is the occasion of a begging crusade. Then come the 'Aposteuzler' renegade monks and vagabond priests. These knocked-out fellows discover some old wayside shrine with a picture in it; the one shrine is good for pestilence, the other for St. Kürius' plague, the third cures possessed people, the fourth cures mad dogs, the fifth protects from early death, and so forth. I will before long, if I have time, write more about these people from my own experience, for the benefit of pious Christians, that they may not be imposed upon by such cheats."[1]

This projected account is very probably the pamphlet, circulated in numerous editions, entitled: 'Liber vagatorum, der Bettlerorden,' 'dictated by a highly worthy Meister, Nomine Expertus in Trufis,' 'for the instruction and information of all men, and for the improvement and reform of those who need bettering.' The book is divided in three parts: the beggars' cadging tricks, some notable tricks, and a slang vocabulary. A Dutch translation remarks on the vocabulary that it was the work of a hospital master who had the book printed at Pforzheim on the Rhine.[2] At least twenty

[1] *Ermanung zu den Questionieren abzustellen überflüssigen kosten. Geben zu Pforzen am ersten Tag des Christmonat*, 1522. See Uhlhorn, ii. 336–337, 433.

[2] Avé-Lallemant, i. 202.; printed Pforzheim edition, 165–184; the Low-German translation prepared from this original version (cf. p. 142), 185–206; Uhlhorn, ii. 515, n. 12, has drawn attention to the passage quoted by us from this last edition, and certainly to our knowledge has been the first to express the opinion that Schweblin was the author of *Liber Vagatorum*. Like Avé-Lallemant, Uhlhorn, and certainly with right, considers the *Liber Vagatorum*—'Bettlerorden' of Pamphilus Gengenbach (in Goedeke, *P. Gengenbach*, 343–370) only a rhymed version of the Pforzheim original edition. If Schweblin is the author, the 'booklet' cannot have been written earlier than 1523.

different categories of beggars are distinguished by proper names.

To guard against this nuisance, beggar ordinances were issued in nearly all the large towns, and municipal guardians of the poor were appointed by the town councils. Parish funds were organised, and their management and distribution entrusted to the town magistrates.

The best poor-laws were those of the Netherlands, where, as early as the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, there was more excellent provision for the care of the poor than in any part of the empire. This poor-law system was in close connexion with the hospitals. For all kinds of incapacitated people, for infirm old men and women, for cripples, for orphans, hospitals were founded: from these hospitals aid was also sent to the poor in town and to needy strangers. The so-called 'Holy Ghost tables,' 'poor-tables,' and 'poor-houses' were found in all Dutch towns. In Antwerp, at the beginning of the fifteenth century, every parish had its poor-house, which also received within its walls travellers passing through the country, and afforded them sick nursing if necessary. In order to make possible an equal rate of expenditure in the different parishes, the council appointed a committee of fourteen persons who, in conjunction with the managers of the 'Holy Ghost tables,' were to superintend the care of the poor and report to the parish on the general condition of poor-law expenditure. With a view to still greater uniformity of management the council, after the middle of the century, appointed a 'master of the poor' at the head of the general poor-law administration, with a staff of councillors under him whose election was bound up

with solemn formalities. The men chosen were obliged to swear an oath that they would faithfully watch over all the poor, and then they received the 'Börse der Barmherzigkeit' (the purse of charity). They were to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, visit the sick, comfort the forsaken, plead the cause of the captives, and provide for the burial of the dead. They were invested with a girdle as emblem of the bond of love which was to unite them with the poor. The wives also of these poor-law councillors devoted themselves to the care of the poor, and showed especial kindness to women in their confinement and to children. Further, there were special 'orphan-mothers' and 'orphan-fathers,' and from the year 1495 an actual 'Waisenkammer' or fund for orphans. For the care of the permanently disabled, such as lunatics, blind and dumb people, &c., two councillors were set apart, one of whom was chosen from the burghers, the other from the artisans. Burgomasters and justices called themselves the guardians of all these unfortunate people. Thus, while an attempt was being made to unify the management of the poor, the system became more and more individualistic.

In Brussels, Louvain, Mechlin, Ghent, Bruges, Namur, and so forth, the same system prevailed as in Antwerp. The council at Brussels was invested by Pope Nicholas V. in 1448 with the secular management of all the hospitals. In many towns the services of the 'grey sisters' were employed for visiting the poor and distributing alms.[1]

[1] Fuller details on this subject are given by P. Alberdingk Thijm in his *Gesch. der Wohltätigkeits-anstalten in Belgien* (Freiburg i. Br., 1887), pp. 94–196.

Out of the poor-law system as it had long existed in the Netherlands, there grew that model system of poor-law administration which the council introduced at Ypern in 1524 or 1525, and which the Emperor Charles V. adopted as the basis of the poor-law system for the whole of the Netherlands. The Ypern system went on the divine command that every one was bound to earn his living according to his powers, but those who were disabled from work were to be provided for by the Christian mercy of the parish. Begging was entirely forbidden. The various kinds of poverty were accurately distinguished; the spheres of charitable institutes and poor-houses were strictly limited; concerning the erection of charity schools and the treatment of strangers there were still minuter regulations; the whole management of the poor was placed under uniform administration.[1]

In the German towns the first thought was, at least to regulate the begging system by definite mendicant ordinances. In Vienna, for instance, according to an ordinance issued by the Emperor Frederick III. in 1442, a Beggar-Master was appointed with full control over all mendicants, male and female, native and foreign, and authorised to punish with the pillory or with imprisonment all 'immorality, disorder or unseemly behaviour.' It was the business of this official to see that nobody obtained alms by begging, 'but only in an honourable way when really needing them,' and 'those only were to beg,' said the ordinance, 'who could say the Paternoster, the Ave Maria and the Creed, and who went to confession at least once a year, at Easter.'

[1] Ehrle, *Beiträge zur Gesch. und Reform der Armenpflege* (Freiburg i. Br., 1881), and Ratzinger, *Armenpflege*, 442.

To such persons, and to such only, the Beggar-Master gave a ticket 'to carry about with them in order that everybody might be assured of the legitimacy of their begging.' People who begged without necessity, or who went about deceiving, were first to be quietly cautioned by the Beggar-Master, and if they did not attend to him, to be punished.[1]

With regard to the town of Cologne it was resolved at a meeting of the council in 1446 that: 'Whereas numbers of people, male and female, from Italian, French, German and other lands, loafers, vagabonds and wastrels, here in this town are given up to idleness and obscenity, although they are strong and able to work, our gentlemen of the council herewith decree, as they have already decreed before, that such able-bodied people, be they men or women, shall, within three days from the time of this meeting, set themselves to work to earn their daily bread. Any of them who do not obey this order, but remain idle after the prescribed time, shall be driven out of this town, and if they come back, a halter shall be put round their necks and they shall be beaten out of the town with rods.'[2]

In Nuremberg, as early as the last half of the fourteenth century, an edict for the regulation of the mendicant system was issued to the following effect:

[1] Uhlhorn, ii. 456.

[2] *Annalen des Histor. Vereins für den Niederrhein*, Heft 28–29 (Cologne, 1876), p. 298. ** Concerning the reasons of the terrible growth of begging in Cologne especially, see V. v. Woikowsky-Biedau, *Das Armenwesen des mittelalterlichen Köln in seiner Beziehung zur wirtschaftlichen und politischen Geschichte der Stadt.*, Breslauer Dissert, p. 48 ff. The author comes to the conclusion (p. 62) that 'the reproach against the mediaeval system of poor law, that it was an essentially indiscriminating one, and that it fostered mendicancy, is not justifiable.'

'Firstly, nobody shall be allowed to beg outside the churches or in the town, and nobody shall beg inside the churches nor inside the town, unless he has a warrant from the town, and said warrant shall be given him in the name of the council by an official thereto authorised.' Only such persons might receive a warrant (and each time only for six months) for whom at least two or three reliable burghers could give assurance on oath that they were in need of alms. People who, on the finding of the proper authorities, 'were able to continue their journey or to work, and were not deserving of alms, were not to be allowed to beg or to receive a warrant.' Foreign beggars were not to be tolerated in the town more than three days.[1] The so-called 'meat and bread foundations' which the burgher, Burkhard Sailer, founded in 1388 and placed under the control of the council, and which developed into a truly 'wealthy fund,' thanks to the endowments of other well-to-do burghers, and above all in consequence of the papal indulgences granted to benefactors in 1460, 1474, 1479 and 1501, were not available for any public beggars, but only for the genuine poor, and among these for the very poorest. Here, too, it was prescribed that 'two honourable and trustworthy burghers, who were acquainted with the character and life of the applicants must first give them a warrant.' Those considered eligible for alms were presented with a leaden counter.[2] A more minute mendicant ordinance was issued by the council in 1478: 'Almsgiving,' it said, 'is a specially praiseworthy, virtuous work, and

[1] Waldau, *Vermischte Beiträge*, iv. 328–331.

[2] 'Stiftungsbrief' in Waldau, *Vermischte Beiträge*, iv. 381–390. See also Th. Volbehr, 'Ein Beitrag zur Gesch. des Armenwesen,' in the *Mitteilungen aus dem germanischen Nationalmuseum*, ii. 211–215.

those who receive alms unworthily and unnecessarily, lay a heavy burden of guilt on themselves.' In order therefore, that the poor and needy ones should not be deprived of their alms by unworthy, non-needy beggar-men and women, the officers appointed to distribute the alms shall, before granting a warrant to anyone, inform themselves accurately as to the 'condition, character and working powers of the applicants; shall find out whether they are married or single, and how many children they have, so as to know if they are really deserving of alms.' Children of beggars, above the age of eight, shall not be allowed to ask for alms, because they are certainly in a position to earn money; such children shall be helped to find work in the town or in the country. Those among the poor, male and female, who were granted permission to beg for alms, were entered in a catalogue. The following rules were laid down for them: 'They must not, unless they are crippled, lame or blind, sit idly as beggars on any working-day outside the churches, but they must employ themselves in spinning, or some other work, according to their capacity. Any one afflicted with an open, pitiful wound or sore on the body or limbs, by the sight of which a pregnant woman might be harmed, must hide such wounds and not expose them to public view.' Those among the poor who were ashamed to ask for alms openly by daylight were given a special warrant, which allowed them to beg in the dark; in summer, however, only during the two first hours, in winter during the three first hours after nightfall, and never without carrying a lantern. On lying-in women special care was bestowed by 'honourable women.' The poor from foreign countries were only

allowed to beg on a few specified days during the year.[1]

Like the council of Nuremberg, the Würzburg Bishop, Rudolf von Scherenberg, in his mendicant ordinance of 1490, by restricting the care of the poor to the parish, testing the claims of the native poor, compelling their children to work and helping them to get work, insured the genuine poor against loss and encroachment from undeserving beggars.[2]

In Frankfort-on-the-Maine the first municipal dispensers of alms, three councillors and one burgher, were nominated in 1437. Their business, under the supervision of the council, was to distribute the donations in money or in kind presented to the council by the burghers, among those who had fallen into distress and poverty, although they had spent their days honourably; among the poor who lived on their own honest toil and yet had not sufficient to keep them in comfort; among the pious poor who were burdened with numbers of children whom they could not feed; finally among good house-wives who were going through their confinements or expecting to be laid up. The distribution of alms always took place in a church. In 1486 the council decreed that only those who had been citizens for eight years, or who had served that length of time in Frankfort, should be eligible for municipal alms; in 1495 'certain useless persons who were not really in need of alms' were excluded by the council. The poor were granted the right, on certain

[1] Baader, *Polizeiordnungen*, 316–320.

[2] Concerning this Würzburg and unprinted ordinance, see V. Gramich in the *Literarische Rundschau für das katholische Deutschland*, 1883, Sp. 500–501. The ordinance confined itself strictly to the Nurembergers.

days in the week, to fetch fire-wood for their own use from the town wood; the older poor were received into a hospital as beneficiaries.[1]

As with the distribution of alms, so in the 'ordinances' of many hospitals, care was taken that only persons who were really needy and deserving should be recipients of charity. Thus the Nuremberger Conrad Mendel stipulated with regard to the hospital which he founded and placed under the management of the council, that '12 men were to be received into it, to the honour of the 12 holy apostles, all of whom must be old, infirm and poor, and unable any longer to live by their own work; and under pain of excommunication these men shall be received solely for the love of God, without any regard to gifts of any sort, or any hope of temporal gain. On these 12 men the works of mercy shall be fulfilled, feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, visiting the sick.' 'Idlers, public beggars, rioters, ill-conditioned people and disreputable riff-raff were for ever to be excluded. For the founder wished, for the praise and glory of God, to provide for the comfort of hard and honest workers who had maintained themselves by strenuous labour, but were now poor and sickly, and were of good character and respectability.'[2] Likewise in a hospital erected in Augsburg in 1454, none were to be admitted but 'poor men who could no longer carry on their handicraft on account of age and illness, who brought with them a respectable record, and who had never begged publicly or taken alms.' A hospital founded at Cologne in 1450, 'was open only to the very poorest and most infirm, whether citizens of Cologne

[1] Kriegk, *Bürgertum*, 163–166, 543. Notes 145 and 146.

[2] 'Stiftungsbrief' of 1388 in Waldau, *Vermischte Beiträge*, iv. 178–193.

or strangers.' Two hospitals in Magdeburg were set apart for 'pilgrims and infirm people'; nobody was allowed admission there for payment of money or gifts.'[1] In numbers of hospitals, for instance at Freiburg and Lucerne, free places were bought for the insane; in many towns, as in Bamberg in 1471, in Lübeck in 1479, in Esslingen in 1500, special houses were built for these unfortunate people.[2] The extremely numerous 'Elenden-Herbergen' (shelters for the miserable) were erected for the benefit of needy travellers. 'Elenden-Confraternities' were also founded for this purpose.[3]

'Of priceless value,' for the larger towns especially, was that 'voluntary devotion to the care of the poor and the sick' of which the 'Weihegärtlein' said in 1509: 'By the grace of God there are in our towns very many hundreds of Brothers and Sisters who out of Christian love and benevolence combine together, solely for the love of God, to minister to the sick, the infirm, the demented and the lepers.'[4]

Among devoted ministers to the sick, special repute attached to the associations of the 'Willigen Armen' (voluntary poor) or the Alexians, a society of lay brothers, who had their charitable houses in Hildesheim, Halberstadt, Treves, Cologne, Aix-la-Chapelle, Frankfort-on-the-Maine, Strasburg, Augsburg and elsewhere, and who devoted themselves to the care of male patients, especially insane persons, and the burial of the dead. The cloister reformer, the Augustinian provost, John Busch, who had the supervision of the associations at Hildesheim

[1] Uhlhorn, ii. 332–334. [2] Uhlhorn, ii. 298.

[3] See for instance, for Frankfort-on-the-Maine, *Bürgertum*, 152–160.

[4] *Wyhegertlin für alle frummen Cristenmenschen* (Mayence, 1509), Bl. 7.

and Halberstadt, penned in 1470 a very edifying description of the lives and work of the Brothers at Hildesheim. 'The inhabitants,' he says, 'are in general very much attached to these Brothers, who watch by the sick, no matter what their illnesses may be, and tend them day and night until their death, fortify them in what is good, cheer and hearten them in their last fight with the temptations of the devil, and then attend to their corpses and carry them to their graves.' 'They do these works of mercy for all who appeal to them.'[1] No less praise was bestowed on the zeal of the Brothers at Halberstadt. The Council at Cologne testified of them that 'they are ready day and night to give their services to rich and poor, in life and in death,' and in 1487 made over to them a second house. Female 'Alexians' also worked actively in many towns in nursing the sick in hospitals and in private houses.[2] Praise of a more meagre description, often indeed harsh censure, was the reward of the Beghine houses; nevertheless, many of these developed, in the second half of the fifteenth century, a blessed service of ministration to the sick and education of orphan children.[3] Besides these associations living under conventual rule, there were in many places free brotherhoods of men and women for voluntary sick nursing. At Strasburg, for instance, every member pledged himself to devote one day and night of every year to sick nursing. On admission of members to the brotherhood, women were asked from the pulpit to collect benevolent gifts for the sick people from house to house.[4]

[1] Grube, *Johannes Busch* (Freiburg i. Br., 1881), pp. 243–247.

[2] Uhlhorn, ii. 390–394.

[3] See Kittel, *Die Beguinen des Mittelalters im südwestlichen Deutschland. Programm*, Aschaffenburg, 1859.

[4] Uhlhorn, ii. 389.

A specially prominent place as 'Benefactor and Father of the Poor' belongs to the Strasburg Cathedral preacher, Geiler von Kaisersberg († 1510), who was also particularly serviceable in his efforts to organise charity.

The spirit of Christian love towards all who were in need, which speaks from his sermons and writings, was in no way different from that which permeates all the church books of instruction and edification of that period, but in clearness of thought and warmth of expression Geiler surpasses all his contemporaries.

'Mercifulness, actuated by love of God, was,' so he preached, 'the most precious of goods.' 'Oh, do not despise the poor on whom the eye of God rests, of whom the Lord is ever mindful, for whom He always cares! Christ was born in poverty and lived in poverty; for the sake of the poor He came into the world to proclaim the Gospel to them. He thought the poor worthy to sit at meals with Him, He went about with the poor, and He preferred their company to that of the rich of this world. He is the staff of hope on which the poor lean, while you, my friends, lean on the reed of riches and society, which soon breaks and pierces your hand.'[1] 'I never remember hearing,' he said with St. Ambrose, 'that any one ever died a bad death who had gladly practised charity towards the poor. But without love and mercy, no one can die a happy death.' 'He that hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, the love of God is not in him.' 'Have you no money or goods, then give your heart, give good words. Hear what the Psalmist says: "Blessed is he who careth for the poor and the needy;

[1] De Lorenzi, ii. 48–49.

the Lord shall deliver him in the time of trouble." Understand well: "He who works for the poor." They cry unto us those torn garments of the poor, those emaciated forms of the poor, those pallid faces of the poor; the old age and the infirmity of the poor cry unto us: blessed are they who understand the poor better than their words. If you have only one son, let God, in the person of this poor, be your second son; if you have two, let Him be third . . . such is charity.'[1]

It is not only, however, as regards temporal and outward goods, wine, bread, money, clothes and suchlike, that we must extend benevolence to the poor, but also as regards inward and spiritual goods, the milk of good doctrine and instruction of the unlearned, the milk of devotion, wisdom, consolation. 'All these are meant by the Word of God when it says how the Lord 'will set the sheep on the right hand and the goats on the left, because they fed the poor, gave them drink and clothing and so forth, and will say: "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was an hungered and ye fed me, I was thirsty and ye gave me drink," and so forth.'[2]

"Invite to your feasts the poor, the maimed, the lame and the blind" according to the admonition of the Lord, and you will be blessed because they have nothing to reward you with; for your reward shall be in the day of the resurrection of the just.' Nevertheless it was not for this reason that they must practise charity. 'Give your alms out of love to God without hope of reward; give abundantly and from a good

[1] *De Lorenzi*, i. 267–272, 414.

[2] The passage in Hasak, *Der christliche Glaube*, 375.

heart; do not drive a profitable trade with benevolence; angle not for great fishes with the worms of your good deeds.' [1]

This applied to all the good works of a Christian; those only were, according to the Church's doctrine, well-pleasing to God and truly meritorious, which were done solely out of love to God. 'Be not anxious through your good works to gain heaven or escape hell, but simply serve God because He is your Father.' 'Some people only serve God in order to obtain eternal life, which is also a creature of God and not God Himself; this aim in your good works is imperfect and spoils your works.' 'Those who serve God for the kingdom of heaven, for their own benefit, that they may not go to hell, those seek for themselves only.' [2]

[1] *De Lorenzi*, ii. 251 and iii. 130, 385.

[2] *Predigten von dem Baum der Seligkeit*, vii. Predigt. The meritoriousness of good works is well explained in a book, *On The Love of God*, published in Augsburg in 1494. 'No human work is truly good and virtuous unless it begins and ends in God. Love to our neighbour is only truly good and virtuous if it is founded on our love to God, that is: if we love God above all and our neighbour for God's sake. Our love to God must include love to our fellow-men, because they are His creatures and He commands us to love them, to wish and do them good as He does, and not to covet the goods they enjoy. Our alms must be given in the same spirit: out of love to God and for His greater honour and glory. And likewise all good works, to be pleasing to God and meritorious, require to proceed from God, to be done with God, and to tend to God's glory. The impelling motive must be Divine Love; the performance must take place "in a state of sanctifying grace," i.e. the performer must have in him the infused virtue of charity; lastly, the final object of the good deed must be the glory of God.'—In Hasak, *Der christliche Glaube*, 163–164. This teaching is to be found in all the books of the period. See above vol. i. 48–54 (German). Martin Eisengrein (*Eine Tröstliche Predigt*, 1565) candidly acknowledges that the Catholic Church, 'the mother of all that believe' has always based the merit of good works on the efficacy of the grace merited for us by Christ. 'Whosoever dares to assert that under the Pope the merits of Christ were ignored has, I

With regard to almsgiving and all other help afforded the needy, not for the sake of reward, but in strict obedience to the command of God, and for the avoidance of deadly sin, there are as strong utterances on the subject in Geiler's writings, as in those of Markus von Weida, who, in an explanation of the Paternoster (1501), says, concerning the fourth petition: 'We shall have to render a heavy account to the Lord our God for the use we have made of our temporal bread and goods; for we are servants and not lords of it, and they are not given us for ourselves alone, but that we may share them with others at proper times and in suitable ways, that is, we should come to our neighbours' help in their time of need. For in times of need all things are in common, especially among us Christians.' 'Therefore, we ask not each for his bread but for "our bread." The rich, who do not help the poor in their need and give them alms, are guilty of as great sin as if they took another's property by force. And so they eat the bread of strangers which in the end will not profit them.' He, therefore, who would not eat the bread of strangers must be as Tobias taught his son: 'Turn not away thy face from any poor man, and the face of the Lord shall not be turned away from thee. As thy substance is, give alms of it according to thine abundance; if thou have little, be not afraid to give alms according to that little; for thou layest up a good treasure for thyself against the day of necessity.'[1] 'Nobody, however, must dare

think, never opened the books of approved papal theologians or even seldom crossed the threshold of a Christian church.'—Hasak, *Herbstblumen*, xlii. 74.

[1] Hasak, *Die letzte Rose oder Erklärung des Vaterunsers nach Markus von Weida* (Ratisbon, 1883), pp. 63–64. See the 'Plenarium' of 1514 in Hasak,

think that he ever did, or could do, so much good on earth that God would be bound in justice to give him his heavenly kingdom, for this gift can only come from the grace of God and by virtue of the bitter sufferings of Christ.' [1]

But, however earnestly Geiler urged people to give alms out of love to God and in obedience to His strict command, he was equally emphatic in his warnings not to give blindly or to any and every beggar and undeserving, unworthy importuner. 'That man was a fool,' he said, 'who did not bestow his gifts in the right way, at the right time and in the right measure.' [2]

*Die Himmelsstrasse oder die Evangelien des Jahres in Erklärungen für das christliche Volk* (Ratisbon, 1882), pp. 330-331. As a strict command it was impressed on the hearts of all believers, with regard to the poor and the sick: 'If thou dost not provide for the needy, the sick, the orphans and the infirm, and wilt not help them according to thy means, thou art,' it says in the *Wyhegertlin für alle frummen Cristenmenschen* of the year 1509 (Bl. 5), 'no other than a murderer of thy neighbour.' 'In like manner,' says the *Spiegel des Sünders* which appeared in 1470, 'hast thou refused thy bread to the hungry, or seen thy fellow Christian in sore need and not come to his help, as thou well mightest, then, as St. Paul says, thou hast slain him.' Geffcken, *Bilderkatechismus*, Beil. p. 64. Similar admonitions were uttered at the same time by the *Spiegel des Christenglaubens* of Ludolf of Göttingen: 'When a man sees another in want and poverty, leaves him to die of hunger and grief, does not help him out of his means, he is a manslayer in the sight of God.' Geffcken, Beil. p. 95. The *Himmelsstrasse* of 1510 says: Against the tenth commandment, 'Thou shalt not covet anything of thy neighbour's'—all those commit sin who withhold the works of bodily or spiritual benevolence, or alms, those who do not, according to their means, succour the poor and the needy in time of want. Hasak, *Herbstblumen*, p. 110. Markus of Lindau in his explanation of the ten commandments sets forth identical thoughts. Cf. Hasak, *Ein Efeukranz* . . . (Ratisbon, 1889), pp. 62, 110. Contemporary *Beichtbüchlein*, e.g. the one published at Frankfort in 1478, exhort the penitent to examine his conscience as to 'whether he has treated the poor as he would have treated Christ.'

[1] Hasak, *Die letzte Rose*, 44.

[2] *De Lorenzi*, ii. 251.

By this, however, he did not mean that whenever a poor man asked for a morsel of bread his whole life must be inquired into. 'Like Lazarus, he requires a bit of bread. He may be a very sinful man, but still he is worth a morsel of bread, for God still lets the sun shine on him and gives him life, air and water.'[1] On the other hand he was urgent in warning people, simple burgher folk especially, against the sham poor who resorted to all sorts of dodges for getting as much given them as possible. 'These impostors,' he said, 'you must reject; for every time you give them alms you injure them and yourselves, for you give them encouragement to sin.'[2]

Concerning these humbugs and impostors he said in his sermons on Brant's 'Narrenschiff' of the year 1498: 'Some of them beg although they can well earn their own living; able-bodied beggars who give themselves up to idleness are punishable; others, beg out of greed only, in order to get a lot of money, and these are highly reprehensible, &c., &c.'

Amongst the 'Bettler-Narren' he reckoned those who did not 'organise charity.'

'There is a great amount of begging and a great number of beggars here. It is the fault of the gentlemen of the Council, who do not regulate and control it. They ought to appoint people to see into this matter. There are plenty of funds here but they are unequally distributed. One man sometimes gets as much "alms" as would be enough for five.'[3]

His own fixed opinion was that the municipal

[1] *De Lorenzi*, i. 415.

[2] *De Lorenzi*, iii. 179–180.

[3] *Keiserspergs Narrenschiff, so er gepredigt hat zu Strassburg*, 1498 (Strassburg edition, printed by John Grieninger, 1520), Bl. 129ᵇ–130.

authorities ought to find means for putting a stop to all public begging. 'Happy the town,' he said in a sermon in 1497, 'where the care of the poor is so well organised that there are no beggars there! This might be the case in Strasburg if only people went the right way to work.'[1] The matter came up for discussion by the Council and in 1500 an ordinance was issued to the following effect: 'Provisions have been made for supplying the wants of the needy poor, and it is therefore decreed that in future neither natives nor foreigners shall beg in the streets or in and outside of the churches.' The tax-gatherers received orders not to allow foreign beggars to remain in the town.[2]

The following year Geiler recommended the council to establish an organised system of poor-relief. It was necessary, he said, in Strasburg, as indeed throughout Christendom, to insure that alms should only be given to the genuine poor and not to those who were least in need and least worthy of them. 'Do not the emperors say in the statute book: "It is our duty as men to provide for those in want and to endeavour that the poor may not lack for food." Upon this emperors and princely councils should act. But they do not. It is, therefore, necessary that every community should provide for its own.' There were in the town large charitable funds for almsgiving, but provision for right distribution of them was lacking. One single official was not enough for this purpose. The town should be divided into six or seven circles and a supervisor

[1] L. Dacheux, *Jean Geiler de Kaysersberg* (Paris-Strasbourg, 1876), p. 91, n. 2.

[2] Dacheux, *Geilers von Kaysersberg, XXI. Artikel und Briefe* (Freiburg i. Br., 1877) Notes to Article xiii. p. 67

appointed for every circle, whose duty it should be to inquire into the condition of the poor and to see that able-bodied beggars and children who could earn their bread were kept at work, and that only the really poor and those unable to work, were made recipients of alms.[1]

Though Geiler complained that the Emperor and the Assembly of Princes did not properly interest themselves in the condition of the poor, it was nevertheless resolved in the Recesses of the Diets at Lindau in 1497, at Freiburg in 1498, at Augsburg in 1500 that 'Every ruler should seriously consider the question of beggars and begging, so that nobody might be allowed to beg for alms who was not weak and infirm in body, and who was not really in need. Also that the children of beggars should be in good time taken from their parents and put to some handicraft or else sent into service, so that they might not always be dependent on begging.'[2] At the Augsburg Diet of 1530 it was further decreed that 'every ruler shall see to it that each town and community feeds and maintains its own poor, and nowhere in the empire shall foreigners be allowed to beg. And should any able-bodied persons be found begging, the same shall be suitably punished according to the law, in

[1] Dacheux, *Geilers XXI. Artikel*, xiii. p. 30–31. The facts set forth in our text fully meet the common assertion 'that the medieval Church teaching on the merit of good works favoured indiscriminate almsgiving, and stood in the way of organised charity, inasmuch as, to secure the reward, it was deemed sufficient to give alms, to get rid of one's wealth without regard for the use or abuse of the wealth so abandoned. Whereas, since salvation by faith without works was taught, alms have been given from a less selfish motive, viz., grateful love springing from faith, the simple wish to do one's duty.' How this grateful and self-sacrificing love worked out in practice will appear from facts soon to be related.

[2] *Neue Sammlung der Reichsabschiede*, ii. 32, 48, 80.

order that they may be a warning and example to others.' It was, however, added that: 'If any town or district is so overcharged with poor people that it is unable to feed them, the magistrates shall have power to send these poor people, with a written warrant, into another district.'[1]

A poor relief ordinance issued by Bishop Conrad III. of Würzburg in 1533, in connexion with the earlier one of 1490 for the town of Würzburg, was specially distinguished by benevolence and circumspection. It was decreed therein that 'The poor-relief was to be under the management of six honourable burghers, who should keep accurate registers of all the poor people and note down full particulars about every separate case. Every poor person found to be deserving should be given a leaden counter to carry about with him or her. Poor people afflicted with pox or the French disease (syphilis) must go into the 'French house'; other sick persons, and above all servants discharged from their situations on account of illness, must be taken into the poor-house and tended there, in order that, as sometimes happens, they may not be left lying friendless on the ground. Further, poor women who are near their time of lying-in must be maintained; poor orphans must be helped to learn some industry; poor young women must be granted a dowry; young and respectable married couples who are needy shall have a sum of money advanced them to start their handicraft, and likewise poor hucksters, so that they may not be compelled to risk their own small savings. For the supervision of beggars, instead of the four mendicancy bailiffs who

[1] *Neue Sammlung der Reichsabschiede*, ii. 343. Renewed at the Diet of Augsburg in 1548, and at the Frankfort Assembly of Deputies in 1577, Bl. ii. 601 and iii. 393.

had hitherto served, four sworn town servants were appointed; to beggars suffering from special diseases a special place was assigned for collecting their alms; as regards the poor scholars, only those who attended the school were allowed to obtain alms by singing in the streets. Further, it was decreed with regard to the women living on daily wages that when the time of field work was over they were to receive alms, but that during the period of work they should only receive alms if their husbands were ill, or they had children to suckle, and were thus kept from work. The dispensers of alms were also to visit the sick and inform themselves as to their needs.[1]

Among the German Synods which busied themselves with the question of the care of the poor, the Cologne Provincial Synod of 1536 stands out prominently. The communal poor-relief system of the Church was as it were focussed in the hospitals, which not only had to take in the sick and disabled poor, old men and women, orphans, neglected and forsaken children, the insane and the lepers, and give shelter two nights running to strangers passing through the land, but also to feed and maintain the poor (who do not beg publicly) in their homes. Every parish and important locality was to provide such a hospital for the benefit of the local poor. If the revenues of a hospital were not sufficient for the needs of all the poor of the district, the pastor was to commission a few trustworthy people of the parish to make collections during divine service, and in every

[1] Contributed by Scharold in the *Archiv des Histor. Vereins von Unterfranken und Aschaffenburg*, v. Heft iii. 136–149. Ordinances adapted to the mitigation of the begging nuisance were also issued in the bishopric of Bamberg in 1546, 1569 and so forth.—Jäck, *Bambergische Jahrbücher*, 255.

church an alms box was to be set up for the benefit of the hospitals. But only such persons were to receive help and support who were disabled by illness, infirmity or age from earning with their own labour their needful food and clothing. To these alone, according to the canonical regulations, were the Church relief and the benevolence of the clergy and laity to be extended. Beggars capable of work and people who were not in want of food and clothing, but only begged for admission from laziness and dislike of work, were not only to be excluded from the hospitals, but also were to be forbidden begging of every description. 'For it is better,' said the Synod, 'that these people should be refused the bread of charity, than that they should be encouraged in their sinful idleness.' On the really indigent and needy, however, the poor-relief officers were to bestow every possible care, and to remember that he was a murderer of the poor who neglected their welfare.[1]

Heavy and shameful abuses existed in plenty. What the condition of things was in Würzburg, for instance, before Bishop Julius Echter von Mespelbrunn called into being his splendid Julius Hospital[2] is shown by a protocol of the cathedral chapter there, dated October 21, 1572: 'The dean of the cathedral reports that there is great disorder in all the hospitals and poor-houses, and that no accounts have been kept in them for a number of years; a woman was lately found dead in the street who, without doubt, had not been able to obtain shelter in any of these places.'[3] When, for instance, the Abbot Ulrich Hackl of Zwettl, in 1597, was commissioned by

[1] Ehrle, 32. Ratzinger, *Armenpflege*, 469–470.

[2] See our remarks, vol. ix. 361 ff. and fuller details in *Buchinger*, 247 ff.

[3] v. Wegele, *Universität Würzburg*, i. 143, n. 3.

the Nether-Austrian Government, in conjunction with three other plenipotentiaries, to inquire into the condition of the Vienna burgher hospital, he found 'on a surprise visitation unknown to and unexpected by the hospital master,' that nearly 400 persons were crowded together in nine rooms; in the children's ward there were thirty-five children and eighteen women and nurses; in the school-children's ward forty-three school-children; in the lying-in ward fifty women, and so forth. Often three or four people were in one bed; the patients suffering from infectious diseases were not separated from the others; the sick rooms were very uncleanly and full of intolerable stenches; a doctor from the medical faculty who was supposed to visit the patients twice a week, had not put in an appearance for more than three weeks, and he never visited the patients in separate rooms at all, but simply had their urine brought to him by an attendant, and prescribed accordingly; but often the patients never got the medicine at all, or else they got the wrong medicine. The hospital master was found to be spending on himself the revenues of a benefice which had been founded for the maintenance of a chaplain for the hospital, and so the patients were left without spiritual ministrations, and many of them died without confession or communion.[1] In the hospital at Innsbruck which was founded by King Ferdinand I., and enlarged by Archduke Ferdinand II., and was under State supervision, the government was often obliged to interfere, because nobody took any interest in the care of the poor people, not even in their burial. Once in the winter when some poor sick people were brought from

[1] This account, compiled from the Acts, is written by Stephen Rössler in the Vienna *Vaterland*, 1885.

a distance on a sledge, and the hospital was overfull, they were laid down outside the building, anywhere, in the snow, and left to their fate.[1] 'In these quarrelsome, schismatic, hateful, usurious, unhallowed times, says a 'Christliche Klageschrift' of 1578, 'with us Catholics also charity such as our forefathers showed to the poor, the needy, the sick and plague-stricken, has not increased, but in many places has greatly diminished, so that these poor people are no longer christianly cared for, as they used to be almost everywhere, and as according to God's command and the ordinances and statutes of the Church, they ought to be.' In order to bring back to works of mercy and Christian love 'those people who in these last perilous times were, alas, so sunk in avarice and usury that they had almost forgotten all piety, virtue and devoutness,' the Frankfort abbey preacher, Valentine Leuchtius, published in 1598 and dedicated to Bishop Neithard of Bamberg, a book of nearly 600 pages entitled, 'Historischer Spiegel von den denkwürdigen Miraculn der vortrefflichen Tugend der Hospitalität und Freigebigkeit gegen den armen Dürftigen.' This 'Spiegel' (mirror) was to serve as proof that the virtue of charity did not consist in mere words, 'not in vainglorious boasting of the lips and the tongue, but in good works and righteous actions, in present help and in heartfelt pity for another's need and misery.'[2]

[1] Hirn, i. 493–494.

[2] Cologne, 1598. Preface. The second part of the book, Bl. 347ᵇ–393, deals with the 'scandalous vices of greed and usury which are altogether opposed to the virtues of benevolence and hospitality.' At the end o fthe Preface the author begs that the reader 'will remember him in his devout and secret prayers, as he' (the author) 'will never forget the reader. God be with us all!'

Like Geiler von Kaisersberg, Luther also, in his address to the nobility of the German nation, pleaded for the abolition of public begging. 'None among the Christians,' he says, 'ought to go about begging; every town ought to provide for its own poor, turn out all foreign beggars, separate the genuine poor from tramps and vagabonds, and organise systematic relief for the deserving poor.' 'There should also be a manager or guardian, whose business it would be to know all the poor, and what their necessities were, and to inform the council or pastor concerning them, and what was the best way of proceeding.' Luther, however, went further than Geiler, in that he wished all the mendicant monks and pilgrims, by whom the people had hitherto been immeasurably taxed, to be done away with.

In the following years admirable poor-relief regulations were formed in numbers of towns, in Augsburg and Nuremberg in 1522, in Strasburg and Ratisbon in 1523, in Breslau in 1525. The Nuremberg ordinance, which in all essential points was based on Catholic views,[1] forbade begging altogether, fixed liberally the amount of alms to be dispensed by guardians of the poor, and aimed at giving the utmost possible help to straightened and impoverished burghers. This document was extensively printed, and in a Leipzig edition its results were praised as follows: 'Now the streets and churches are clear and free from crowds of vagrants, at which everybody is well-pleased.'[2] In the Strasburg ordinance also, as Geiler had already

[1] Fr. Ehrle, 'Die Armenordnungen von Nürnberg (1522) und von Ypern (1525),' in the *Histor. Jahrbuch der Görres-Gesellschaft*, ix. 450–479.

[2] Uhlhorn, iii. 57.

wished, all begging was put down, and a system of poor-relief established.[1]

The first attempt at complete remodelling of the poor-relief system was made by Carlstadt at Wittenberg in 1532. According to his scheme all modes of begging whatsoever, that of the beggar monks also, and the collections by the 'pardoners' and in the churches were to cease. All the rents and taxes due to the houses of God, the clergy and the corporations were to flow into one common chest, and out of these funds the clergy and the poor were to be provided for, and capital lent out to the burghers at 4 per cent. If these funds did not suffice, then everyone, whether priest or burgher, must pay a poor rate in proportion to his means.[2] This ordinance, however, did not come into play. In the same year Luther's friend, Wenceslaus Link, under the title of 'Ekklesiastes' busied himself at Altenburg, for the organisation of poor relief in that town, and another ordinance was issued, but without any result. Towards the end of October of the following year Link, in a pamphlet addressed to the burgomaster and Council, inveighed very strongly against 'the whole roguish corporation,' namely, 'priestdom, monkdom and all clerically denominated persons, who were commonly addicted to idlemongering and belly-pampering,' and insisted that 'donations, foundations, bequests and suchlike endowments for almsgiving must not be spent in fostering idleness and feeding able-bodied rascals.'

[1] ** See A. Baum, *Magistrat und Reformation in Strassburg bis 1529* (Strasburg, 1887), p. 56–61. According to Reuss, *Justice criminelle*, 86, the prohibition of public begging had little result: soon afterwards public mendicancy began again.

[2] Uhlhorn, iii. 61.

For the rest he had nothing encouraging to say about the organisation established. 'A year ago,' he complained, 'it was attempted to set up a common fund for the maintenance of the poor, and two coffers also were placed in front of the churches, and foreign beggars and school children running round begging were put a stop to. But, unfortunately, not only have these Christian intentions not been carried out, but things have even gone backwards, so that many pious persons who were inclined to help in the new scheme, have withdrawn their hands, and much murmuring has arisen among the common people. I have frequently in the pulpit endeavoured to stir people up to carry into effect these Christian attempts, but nobody would take the matter up.' 'Where love is cold and does not help the needy, God sends a curse and withdraws the blessing, which methinks is plainly manifest here at Altenburg, for there is much loss of temporal goods, side-by-side with this contempt of the divine word; be sure also that God will visit the town severely if no improvement takes place, especially in the matter of this common fund which no one much needs.'[1] In the course of the year 1523, through the immediate influence of Luther, an ordinance for the common fund came into effect in the Saxon town of Leisnig. To this fund all religious foundations, all convent property and pious gifts and bequests were to be devoted. It was to be under the management of a committee of ten men elected yearly from among the councillors, the nobles, the burghers, and the peasants, and to be used by them

[1] *Von Arbeyt und Betteln, wie man solle der Faulheyt vorkommen und yederman zu Arbeyt ziehen* (1523, at the end: printed at Zwickau by Jörg Gastel), Preface (Friday after SS. Simon and Jude, 1523), Bl. B. 3 ff. See the statements of Ehrle, *Armenordnungen*, 474–475.

for the benefit of the parochial clergy and church officials, the German schools and the poor.[1] The first of these, however, were so badly looked after, that only two years later, in 1525, Luther complained that the people of Leisnig would drive away their preachers by hunger. It was discovered by the church inspectors of the Saxon Electorate in 1529 that the preacher at Leisnig was obliged to carry on a trade and to maintain himself by selling beer; as regards the schoolmaster, the inspectors, in 1534, found that for five years no salary had been paid him.[2]

By degrees all Protestant lands and towns came to have their own poor relief systems and poor funds under the management of men who were sometimes called deacons or Levites, sometimes simply coffer-masters, and who had to administer the poor relief according to strict rules.

Among the Catholics severe and denunciatory opinions were pronounced against this poor relief.

'First of all,' wrote George Wizel in 1535, 'I bring against them' (the sects) 'the charge of having nearly everywhere abolished and rendered useless the stipends which our fathers richly bestowed on the poor; which proceeding is not only contrary to love but also to honesty; contrary to love because it injures the poor; contrary to honesty because it sets aside the last wishes of the dead. In this way also the "Seelbad," the "Caren," the yearly bounties bestowed on a certain number of poor people, the free meals and so forth have been done away with, and thus the poor suffer privation.'

[1] Ehrle, *Armenordnungen*, 473. Uhlhorn, iii. 62–64. ** See also Nobbe in the *Zeitschr. für Kirchengesch*, x. 575.

[2] Burkhardt, *Sächsische Kirchen- und Schulvisitationen*, 95–188.

'Altogether,' Wizel said in another place, 'the poor are treated with greater harshness than formerly.' 'In former times there were Christians who so loved the poor and the beggars that they called them their lords, and even their sons; they washed their feet, made their beds, cooked their food and waited on them at table, as though on Christ Himself. Now, however, it has come to this that entrance to the town is forbidden them, they are driven out of it, the gate is closed against them, as though the poor miserable people were devils and sworn foes of every land.'[1] The old Catholic spirit, which regarded as a work well-pleasing to God that the great ones of the earth should do personal services to the poor, 'as to Christ Himself,' had become so incomprehensible that, for instance, the preacher John Brenz thought it quite contemptible when the Emperor Charles V. in 1544, on Maundy Thursday, at Spires, washed the feet of twelve poor people. 'Will the Son of God,' wrote Brenz to Melanchthon, 'be able much longer to endure such spectacles? He will not.'[2]

As regards the new poor-boxes, Wizel saw in them a proof that 'through the fault of this party all good works had lost their dignity.' 'Only see,' he said, 'how they proceed with this poor box which is in truth more an usury or a parsons' box, than an offering to God

[1] Döllinger, i. 50, 55.

[2] '. . . Haec spectacula filius Dei diu perferre posset? Non feret.'—Letter of April 22, 1544 in the *Corp. Reform.* v. 368. It was equally repulsive to Bucer that the Emperor 'should daily repeat long prayers kneeling on his knees, should lie on the ground saying his rosary, his eyes fixed on an image of the Virgin'; Bucer said of these devotions: 'The Emperor often now wars against Christ.'—Letter to Calvin of October 25, 543, in *Calvini Opera*, xi. 634.

and the community.'[1] 'The new poor-box which they have set up chiefly benefits the leaders of the sects; the poor get scarcely a pfennig of what is collected on Sundays. The amount of the collections is meagre in the extreme according to the evidence of their own complaints. Only the very fewest are in favour of this poor-box, and nobody denies that the poor and needy live more hardly and starve more miserably under this new rule than was the case under the Roman Church.'[2]

In like manner wrote the abbot of St. Michael's in Lüneburg: 'We advise the authorities as well as the community, to look not only at the words of the poor-box preachers and their deacons or cash-keepers, but at their deeds. For the poor complain now much more than they did formerly. Through the proceedings of some one or other the 'coffer of God' (Gotteskasten) has become a Judas' purse. What becomes of what is put into the coffer? This is best known to the cash-keepers and their preachers, some of whom expect to receive their thousands. I keep silence as to the way in which so much of the money disappears, so that no one can find it.' 'Where is there a town in which the coffers are placed under the care of such people as we read of in the Acts of the Apostles, chapter vi.? Wherever did the deacons of those days preach and hunt in order to get the goods of the Temple, the revenues of the Jewish priesthood, into their own coffers or control? They took under their management only what their brethren in the faith brought them.'

[1] Döllinger, i. (2nd edition), 35.

[2] Döllinger, i. 64. Uhlhorn, iii. 104, quotes this utterance of Wizel's, but simply omits the thoroughly well-founded statement: 'The amount of the collection is meagre in the extreme, according to the evidence of their own complaints.'

The Hamburg preacher, Stephen Kempe, replied to the Abbot as follows in 1531: 'It was the habit of wicked men to suspect others. What warrant have you for such murderous advice to the magistrates and the community? Do the poor complain? Who are these poor, I should like to know? The wretched vagrants and imposters? or the wretched beggar-monks? To such as these you had better have quoted 2 Thessalonians, iii. 10, "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work neither should he eat." If there are any more of these "poor" let them come to the front and show themselves, that we may see what they are and what they lack.'

What countless numbers of poor came forward and showed themselves, who did not belong to the class of land loafers or beggar-monks, is seen from the history of every land and every town. Many protestants and protestant rulers found reason enough for 'looking at the hands of the cash-keepers' according to the abbot's advice, and for not despising this advice, like Kempe, as 'unjust, seditious and blood-thirsty.'[1]

In Würtemberg the Dukes frequently complained that the coffer-ordinances were not properly carried out, and that the poor funds were badly administered and dissipated. 'In particular,' says one of these ordinances in 1552, 'certain of the upper and under officials,

[1] Staphorst, part II. of vol. i. 234–237; cf. Uhlhorn iii. 103–104, and 75, where are Kempe's remarks on the superiority of the 'common fund' to the scattered alms and gifts at the doors, which the Abbot praised. The 'Pröwe-Bock,' of the Abbot against which Kempe directed his polemics, I have not been able to find. ** Concerning this lost work see A. Wrede, *Die Einführung der Reformation im Lüneburgischen durch Herzog Ernst den Bekenner* (Göttingen, 1887), p. 151 ff.

guardians and so forth, have been found guilty of daily excesses in drinking and eating by which they have robbed the poor funds: hospital money, fruit and wine, and also immovable goods, have been used by them for their own personal advantage, and the poor have been little cared for.' 'Among the poor in their own homes especially,' wrote Duke Christopher ten years later, 'there were now and again cases of serious want and starvation: nobody would take an interest in the poor, and so systematic collecting for the poor had been given up.' 'Moreover the revenues of the hospitals and of other charitable institutions were used for personal gratification and not for those in need.' Duke John Frederick also said that the poor relief ordinances had been so much disregarded that the hospitals and the poor funds had been subject to all sorts of disorder, neglect and waste, and also that there had been fraudulent dealings with the poor-boxes, so that the poor were wretchedly provided for. According to a decree of 1614, well-to-do people, who in spite of admonition would not give alms at all, or not adequately, were compelled, according to their means, to pay a weekly poor-rate; if they refused to pay this, they were to be punished by a money fine which would go to the poor-box.[1]

Concerning the 'Gotteskasten' in Hesse, a Marburg Synod of 1573 said that 'some of them were quite at a low ebb, and some had only a fabulous existence.'[2]

'As daily experience shows,' said the Elector John George of Brandenburg in 1573, 'the common coffers

[1] Reyscher, xii., 319, 321-322, 340, 635-638, 656, 660 note.

[2] Rommel, *Neuere Gesch. von Hessen*, i. 204. The Anabaptist Jorg said in 1538 that the melancholy experiences he had had as a Protestant cashkeeper had driven him into the arms of the Anabaptists.—Niedners, *Zeitschr. für histor. Theologie*, xxviii. 627.

decrease more and more, for one reason because owing to the bad times and high prices the number of poor to be helped grows larger and larger, and secondly because no one any longer contributes to them.' [1]

In an ordinance of 1588 for the Saxon electorate where the territorial Prince Augustus exerted himself strenuously to improve the system of poor-relief, it says: The poor-boxes 'are almost lost to memory.' [2]

The Lutheran Wolfgang Russ puts these words in the mouth of the people: 'Go to, we have indeed come in for good times! The benefices and tithes of the parsons must do everything; they can bear all, they must supply everybody. Is it not a happy state of things? We dare no more give anything for the love of God; no beggar is any longer allowed to come to my house, therefore I am not allowed to visit any in their own homes.' 'Among rich ladies it is usual for each one to dispose of a little capital for her private expenses. They have a purse for playing cards, a purse for shopping, and a purse for daily household expenses; but the fourth purse, i.e., the poor-bag, has got no bottom; this one is made of devil's skin and not a single kreuzer (coin with a cross) will stay in it, and none comes out of it either. The poor beggars' beggarly common coffer, the parsons' benefices and tithes must do it all.' [3]

In Frankfort-on-the-Maine the average amount of collections for the poor, which were placed under the management of the cash-keepers, averaged 372 gulden in the years 1531–1536; in the years 1555–1556 they sank to 182 gulden, and in 1560–1561 to 149 gulden; [4] in 1583 they had become so insignificant as to evoke from

[1] Mylius, i.[a] 293.
[2] *Codex Augusteus*, i. 1429.
[3] Döllinger, i. 233, n. 49.
[4] Uhlhorn, iii. 110–111.

the town council the statement: 'In this town people are so careful and sparing in the bestowal of alms that when the alms-boxes are opened yearly in the churches there is scarcely enough in them—and it is a scandal to have to say this of Christians—to keep a handful of poor people out of want during the year, or even during one month. How more than true it is then and demonstrable that the majority of people do not give more to the poor in a quarter of or indeed in a whole year, than they spend at one drinking-bout in a tavern.'[1]

The condition of things as regards poor-boxes and poor relief was particularly melancholy at Hamburg, where in the Middle Ages charity towards the poor had been so liberal and bountiful.[2] The new system of poor-relief which came into existence with the introduction of the new doctrine, soon began to decline. The articles drawn up from time to time by the guardians of the poor show that as early as 1558 meetings for considering the wants of the poor seldom took place, that the deacons had to be kept up to their duties by fear of punishment, and that cases of punishment frequently occurred. In 1600, the guardians themselves acknowledged that 'they were remiss and negligent in their work, did not properly superintend the business of poor-relief, and were discordant and divided among themselves.' They had also to be enjoined, in the exercise of their office, not to be influenced by feelings of friendship, not to

[1] Kirchner, *Gesch. Frankfurts*, ii. 430. In 1587 the council decreed that 'no will or testament should be confirmed in the chancery in which nothing was bequeathed to the common coffer, or the hospital, or to the town.'

[2] Koppmann, *Hamburgs kirchliche und Wohltätigkeitsanstalten im Mittelalter*, Hamburg, 1870. Lappenberg-Gries, *Die milden Privatstiftungen zu Hamburg* (2nd edition Hamburg, 1870), xv. ff. Büsch, *Histor. Bericht von dem Gange und fortdauernden Verfall des Hamburger Armenwesens seit der Zeit der Reformation*, Hamburg, 1786.

accept gifts or rewards, but to have regard solely to the best interests of the poor.[1] In 1613 the Directors of the Orphan House addressed to the council a petition in which they said: 'Some time ago we were obliged to state officially that the poor of this place were very badly looked after and provided for by the guardians of the "Gotteskasten." It is a matter of daily experience, patent to all, that there are a great number of poor householders who are driven by their sore need and poverty to beg from door to door at the burghers' houses, and they complain very bitterly that they get no help from the "Gotteskasten."' 'There are also a number of poor widows who come to us every day with complaints that they have so many children that they cannot feed them by their own toil; and when they apply for alms from the "Gotteskasten" they are repulsed, and are therefore compelled to bring their children up to begging and thieving and other improper ways, which they stick to all the rest of their lives, and from which it is very difficult to turn them, as daily experience shows. When poor people are laid up with illness, little or nothing is given them from the poor-boxes and they are left to die in great misery without any help: of such cases, were it necessary, more than enough could be brought forward.' Among these poor people there was great distress and misery; on behalf of numbers of them they, the Directors of the Orphanage, had made urgent appeals to the cash-keepers and given them exact particulars as to where they lived, how many children they had, and what were their wants and infirmities; but not only had

[1] Kiehn, i. 6. W. v. Melle, *Die Entwicklung des öffentlichen Armenwesens in Hamburg* (Hamburg, 1883), p. 19 ff.

no help been forthcoming, but the little which they had had before from the 'Gotteskasten' was withdrawn. The petitioners begged especially that 'pity should be shown to the poor heavily burdened widows "who had young babies to suckle, or weak and sickly children, or such large families that they could not maintain them by washing, charing, spinning and other female work, even if they could get washing and charing to do; but as they were often naked or ill clothed no one would take them into their employment, and so they were reduced to spinning."' The cash-keepers were all at loggerheads, but the council should consider whether such want of union was sufficient reason for leaving so many poor, ailing widows and orphans to starve. It was much to be desired that those who refused to befriend these poor sufferers should sometimes visit them in person, that they might see and hear for themselves their misery, their tears and sighs, and not leave everything to be done by the cloisters and the mendicancy bailiffs; they would then undoubtedly bestir themselves to improve matters, and would take these things more to heart. For it is, alas, a matter of daily experience that not the poor parents only, but numbers of children also come to ruin, almost starve, lose their health and so forth. And there are also frequent cases in which such merciless hardness drives parents to put their children out in the street, and run away from them, and then these children are brought to us in the orphanage. Others tell their children to get out of their way and do not care what becomes of them, so long as they are rid of them; they say out plainly that it breaks their hearts to see their children starving and dying before their eyes.' In short it was urgently necessary that the burgomaster and the

council should themselves look seriously into these things, in order that the poor of the district might be helped in their need, and better looked after, and that the wrath and chastisement of God might not descend upon the town.' In excuse of the cash-keepers the petitioners ended by saying 'it was not unknown to them that the "Gotteskasten" were very poorly supplied, and that they fell short every year, and that it was hard to give out of an empty hand.' Hence the council would do well to consider as to ways and means by which the 'Gotteskasten' might be kept full 'for God had abundantly blessed this town, above other towns, as well in population as in good food and good government, and it was a great scandal before God and man to leave the poor "quite unaided and forsaken."'[1]

This orphanage, whose manager pleaded so warmly the cause of the poor, was founded in 1597,[2] but not very satisfactorily endowed: Twice a year, by order of the Council, gifts and alms were collected for it by the Director, and the Council also enjoined the clergy to ask for generous contributions from their pulpits. 'The managers,' said the Council, 'have not only circumstantially described how intolerable the burden of the orphanage has become, both because the institute is filled to overflowing with orphans, native and foreign, and with unhappy foundlings and deserted children, and because the revenues of said orphanage have greatly fallen off owing to low rents and a marked decrease in charitable donations.'[3]

This decrease of benevolence to the poor and of contributions in general to all good objects, and the

[1] Staphorst, Part I., vol. iv. 677–683. Kiehn, i. 377–391.
[2] Kiehn, i. 7 ff. [3] Kiehn, i. 348–349; cf. Staphorst, 649–650.

increase of an insatiable greed of gain were matters of standing complaint among the Protestants. Nobody spoke more strongly and more frequently on the subject than Luther. 'Under the papacy,' he said, 'it snowed alms, foundations, legacies. Under the Evangel, on the contrary, no one will give a farthing.'[1] 'Under the papacy people were charitable and gave gladly, but now under the Evangel nobody any longer gives anything, but they all fleece each other, and each one wants to grab all for himself alone. And the longer the Evangel is preached, the deeper do people become sunk in avarice, pride and vainglory, just as if the poor beggar was always to remain here.' 'All the world fleeces and flays, and yet nobody must be called avaricious, but everybody is a good evangelical and a good Christian. And this fleecing and flaying in done to nobody so much as to poor Brother Study, and to the poor pastors in towns and villages.' 'These must stand still and let themselves be skinned and strangled, and what the peasants, burghers and nobles scrape off them they drink and gorge away, or spend on all too extravagant, luxurious food and clothing; they either drive it down their throats, or hang it round their necks. Therefore I have often said that such a state of things cannot last much longer; it must collapse; either the Turks or Brother Veit will come and at one stroke carry off all that people have so long been amassing by flaying, fleecing, robbing, and thieving; or the Day of Judgment will rush in and put an end to the game.'[2]

In other parts of his writings, Luther says: 'Under the papacy everybody was kind and merciful, they

[1] Collected Works, xliii. 164.

[2] Collected Works, v. 264–265; cf. 23, 313.

gave joyfully with both hands and with great reverence. Nowadays, although they ought to show themselves grateful for the holy Evangel, no one will give anything, but only "take." Formerly every large town could richly support a few cloisters, not to speak of mass-priests and wealthy foundations; now they even grudge to maintain two or three preachers, spiritual ministers and instructors of youths in one town, even when they have not got to do it out of their own but out of alien goods which are still left over from the papacy.'[1] And again: 'Those who ought to be good Christians because they have heard the gospel, are harder and more merciless than before; as is too plainly patent to all beholders. Of old, when under the guidance of the papacy and of a false worship, people were obliged to do good works, everybody was ready and willing. Now, on the contrary, the world has learnt nothing else than to flay, fleece, and openly rob and plunder by lying and cheating, by usury, forestalling and overcharging. And everyone acts against his neighbour, as though he did not regard him as a friend, still less as a brother in Christ, but as a murderous enemy, and only wanted to get everything for himself alone. This goes on daily and gains head without intermission, and is the most common practice and custom in all classes, among princes, nobles, burghers, peasants, in all courts, towns and villages, yea verily in all houses. Tell me, where is there a town however large that is pious enough to collect together as much as would maintain one schoolmaster or pastor? Yes indeed, if it had not been for the charitable alms and endowments of

[1] Collected Works, xiii. 123.

our forefathers, the burghers in our cities, the nobles and peasants in the country, would long ago have been deprived of the Evangel, and not a single poor preacher would have been fed and clothed. For we will not do it ourselves, but we take and seize by force what others have given and founded.' 'Thanks also to the dear Evangel, the people have become so abominably wicked, so inhuman, so diabolically cruel and merciless, that they are not content with profiting by the Evangel themselves, growing fat thereon through plunder and robbery of Church goods, but as far as others are concerned they starve the gospel completely out. You may count upon your fingers, here and elsewhere, all that they give and do for it, they who profit by it themselves, for ourselves, who are living now, there has long been no preacher, no scholar able to teach our children and descendants what we have taught or believed.' 'Ought we not to be thoroughly ashamed of ourselves when we think of our parents and forefathers, kings and nobles, princes and others, who gave so liberally and so benevolently, even to superfluity, to churches, parsonages, schools, foundations, hospitals, &c., and by all which they and their descendants were not impoverished?'[1]

'I fear me,' he said, preaching on the robbery of widows and orphans, 'that we are in such wise trifling with the Evangel, that we are a greater offence to God than the papists. For if there is to be stealing it is better to steal from a rich man than from a poor beggar, or an orphan who has nothing but a morsel of bread. Sirach said: "Do not the widow's tears run down

[1] Collected Works, xiv. 389–391.

her cheek, and her cry against him that causeth them to fall? For from the cheek they go up even to heaven, and the Lord that heareth will not be delighted with them." God is not called in vain the Father of widows and orphans, for if they are forsaken by every man God still looks after them!' He pronounced a woe: 'Woe unto you peasants, burghers, nobles, who grab and scrape up everything for yourselves and pretend all the time to be good evangelicals.' [1]

Because people were so charitable under the papacy God, in reward, gave them good times then. 'Christ says: "Give and it shall be given unto you; good measure pressed down and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom." And this also is shown by the experience of numbers of pious people of all times, who before our day gave alms liberally for the office of preaching, for schools, for the maintenance of the poor, and so forth, and to whom God in return gave good times, peace and rest; hence the proverb which has gone abroad among the people and which confirms what I have said: 'Churchgiving does not hurt any one, almsgiving does not impoverish, ill-gotten goods do not profit.' Hence we now see in the world the opposite of what was seen formerly: because such insatiable avarice and greed prevail, and nobody gives anything to God or man, but, on the contrary, they take for themselves what others have given, thus sucking the blood and the sweat of the poor. God gives us in reward scarcity, discontent and all sorts of misfortune, until at last we shall be reduced to eating one another up, rich and poor, great and small, all alike will be devoured by each other.' [2]

[1] Collected Works, xliv. 356–357. [2] Collected Works, xiii. 224–225.

Similar complaints of the decrease of the olden time charity towards the poor which helped them by benevolent foundations of all sorts and by alms, occur in the sermons of other preachers of the new Evangel.[1]

'Cruel mercilessness,' wrote the preacher Thomas Rorarius in 1572, 'has gained ground everywhere; almsgiving is considered a thing of the past, and yet everyone who wished to give proof of his faith ought to abound in good works towards his neighbours'; as in former days the poor had been abundantly helped, so ought to it be nowadays: only the merciful would find mercy with God.'[2]

'Our Catholic ancestors,' said Andrew Musculus, superintendent general of the Altmark, 'had thought diligently about future things, and in order to ward off future punishment had done all they possibly could, in the way of mortification, fasting, praying, almsgiving, foundations and so forth; now, on the contrary, people thought neither of heaven nor of hell, neither of

[1] The preachers of the Duchy of Pfalz-Zweibrücken bear witness in a joint written statement of May 21, 1599, to the decrease of benevolent works. 'Our forefathers,' they complain, 'richly endowed the churches, but nowadays love is becoming extinct, for very few give anything, and what is given falls far short or is misused.'—J. Schwebel, *Teutsche Bücher und Schriften*, Part II. (Zweibrücken, 1598), p. 348. ** Stephen Hering (Preacher at Gottleuben in Saxony), in *Eine guthertzige warnungschrift für künfftigem Unglück unsers lieben Vaterlandes Deutscher Nation* (Dresden, 1609), writes as follows of the neglect of the poor: 'If this is not true amongst us, why did the pious Christians in our land, for some length of time sing at their meetings:

The poor are in their need forsaken,
The bread from out their mouths is taken,
The judgment day is sure at hand.

This Church hymn is by Erasmus Alberus and appeared first in 1548. See Ch. W. Stromberger, *Erasmus' Alberus' Geistliche Lieder* (Halle, 1857), p. 46. According to this, the neglect of the poor was treated in a Protestant hymn as a sign of the coming of the Day of Judgment.

[2] *Fünfundzwanzig Predigten*, xxxv$^{b}$. 93$^{b}$, 154 ff.

God nor of the devil.' 'Churches, schools, hospitals are plundered, robbed, destroyed; the young are grievously neglected, the children of the poor are shut out from study, God's poor are forsaken.' 'Pilfering, stealing, taking,' preached Musculus at Frankfort-on-the-Oder, 'goes on without ceasing, nothing is spared, albeit it is the blood and sweat of the poor; the devil is especially at home in the council-house.' 'The old women are obliged to freeze and starve in tumble-down hospitals; their rooms are very dog-kennels; rats and mice swarm in their beds of straw and nobody cares. All the years I have lived I have never seen the poor so badly looked after as now,' in the year 1576. 'The cash-keepers deserve hell for their treatment of the poor; they will not allow them to stand in front of the church doors, and yet they will give them nothing.'[1]

Johann Winistede, preacher at Quedlinburg, implored the town councillors there that 'They would give all possible diligence to seeing that the poor people in the hospitals of the Holy Ghost, of St. John, and of our Blessed Lady, were well cared for, and that the funds intended for them were not kept from them or diminished.'[2]

In the Mansfeld district, according to the report of Erasmus Sarcerius in 1555, the care of the poor was quite neglected; the hospitals were wretchedly managed; the funds intended for poor relief were fraudulently spent.'[3]

[1] See our remarks, vol. vii. 299 ff. Spieker, *Andreas Musculus*, 189–190, 288–290.

[2] *Kurtze Anzeigung*, Preface Bl. C.

[3] Neumeister, 'Sittliche Zustände im Mansfeldischen,' in the *Zeitschr. des Harzvereins*, xx. 525, 526.

The town of Parchim in Mecklenburg had, in 1563, ten hospitals and poor-houses dating from Catholic times, but in that very year, owing to many foundations having been dissipated, the number had to be reduced to four.[1]

As regards the hospitals founded in olden times, Ambrosius Pape, Lutheran pastor at Klein-Ammensleben, said in 1586: 'It is a great and punishable evil that they no longer admit poor people, but only rich ones. Whoever cannot give 20 talers or 50 or 100, need not seek admission to these hospitals.' 'The excuse that they "cannot get on with this meagre income" will not hold water, for people may be admonished from the pulpits that every Christian ought to contribute something according to his means, and open a benevolent hand towards the poor, for which God would richly reward him.' 'Further, several people might be sent out from such poor-houses, to make house-to-house collections for them; God helping, this would be approved of by many people, not only because other beggars would not be allowed to go round and be a nuisance to them, but also because these organised beggars would pray for their donors and benefactors and wish and procure them all sorts of blessedness.' 'To give to the poor according to one's means was earnestly commanded by God and met with God's unfailing reward.' Pape quoted in proof of this a number of Bible texts, for instance: 'He that giveth to the poor, lendeth to the Lord, and the Lord will reward him with interest'; 'Almsgiving delivers from all sin, and from death'; 'Water quencheth a flaming fire, and almsgiving resisteth sins'; 'Make unto you friends of the

[1] Boll, i. 390–399.

mammon of iniquity, that when you shall fail, they may receive you into everlasting dwellings.' [1]

In a German pamphlet on the first organised system of poor relief in the Duchy of Zweibrücken, published at Zweibrücken in 1557 by the General Superintendent Cunemann Flinsbach, it says: 'It has come to pass in these last times even according to the prophecy of Christ, Matthew xxiv., where he says that in the latter days the love of many will wax cold. For in the days of the Apostles and in the primitive Church, godly zeal drove Christians to give gladly for the love of God. This too was the case with some of the Christian emperors who were very kind to the poor and helped them in a very Christian manner in their distress. And under the papacy people gave abundantly for the maintenance of divine worship and for the relief of the poor. But, alas, in these our days, although the Evangel and God's Word are being preached in truth and purity, not only has this zeal to help the poor ceased, but when the poor are deprived of the funds and endowments which were intended for them, the world does not protest. And this is certainly not the least among the causes of the present day scarcity, bad crops and other evils.'

The writer then proposes schemes for poor relief modelled partly on the Catholic practice, partly on 'Christian, well-ruled churches, such as were to be found in Saxony, Würtemberg, Strasburg and elsewhere.' [2]

The preachers themselves could not be blind to the fact that the new doctrine of justification through

[1] 'Bettel- und Garte-Teufel' (see below p. 506 f.), in the *Theatrum Diabolorum*, ii. 183–184.

[2] ** See *Beitr. zur bayerischen Kirchengesch.* iv. 279.

faith alone, everywhere cut the nerve of voluntary sacrifice.

'However much,' wrote the renowned theologian, Andrew Hyperius, professor since 1542 at the University of Marburg, 'people are exhorted to benevolence towards the needy and distressed, nobody will take any interest in them: it is, alas! evident that all feeling of love is extinguished in the hearts of men. Preachers must therefore be more sparing in the pulpit with the doctrine of salvation by faith alone, they must incite their congregations to good works and, as far as this is possible, bring them back to a fruit-producing faith.' [1]

In like manner spoke the Superintendent General, Christopher Fischer: 'Works of mercy are all frozen up, while those of mercilessness have mightily increased. Our dear forefathers by bequests and in other ways made benevolent provisions for the maintenance of churches and schools, but now, alas! we see every day that charity towards the poor, towards hospitals, towards poor students and others has grown quite cold; the poor are fleeced and flayed, and ground down to the uttermost farthing.' [2]

'With our forefathers,' wrote Sixt Vischer, pastor at Lützelburg in 1608, 'works of charity were constantly practised towards the poor people in hospitals, infirmaries, and lazarettos, and food, drink, cordials, money, sheets, shifts and other necessary articles were given to them in abundance. Where now are there

[1] Döllinger, ii. 215–216.

[2] Döllinger, ii. 306–307. See also what Daniel Greser, in 1542, superintendent at Dresden, says, ii. 349–350; further, A. Pancratius, *Allgemeine, immerwährende geistliche Practica* (Frankfort, 1605), p. 66, 148.

any works of mercy? Where any trust and faith, where discipline and respectability? What has become of the conscience of the nation?'[1]

The lack of voluntary devotion to the poor for the love of God was especially evident among the Protestants during the reign of the pestilential diseases which became so frequent in Germany. It then became necessary to employ paid sick-nurses, and those available did the work more for the sake of a livelihood than out of love.[2] 'Those people,' it says in an edict of the Elector Augustus of Saxony of April 21, 1572, 'who are appointed, in times of epidemics, to feed the sick, and who do not attend to them, but neglect them and let them die of hunger, shall be punished by imprisonment or banishment from the country according to the circumstances of their offence.' 'The sextons, or other persons, often put an end to patients who are lying on their death-beds, and then rob them of whatever they find by them. Such persons shall be punished with the wheel as robbers, or if they have only put an end to the patients and not stolen anything, they shall be executed with the sword.'[3] In Kempten in 1564, from fear of the plague which had broken

[1] *Lützelburgische Bekehrung* (Munich, 1608), p. 26–27. The Catholic polemic, John Nas, did not on the whole exaggerate when he said: 'Because the new faith is so powerful that it alone is enough for salvation, all works of mercy have ceased. When have there ever been as many poor people as now? When have the hospitals been as poor as now? What numbers of convents have been confiscated on the pretext of endowing hospitals, and yet these hospitals have never been so much in debt as now. What has become of the funds left to schools? How many poor people have been fed from the goods of the convents? The doctrine of salvation by faith only has annihilated the whole of Christian life; through this doctrine Germany has been brought to ruin.' See our remarks, vol. x. 102 ff.

[2] Uhlhorn, iii. 131.

[3] *Codex Augusteus*, i. 118.

out, the preachers visited nobody on their sick-beds.[1] That the Jesuits at these perilous times showed such heroic devotion in voluntary service, excited special attention among the Protestants. After a plague in Constance, where, in 1611, three Fathers and three Brothers who in nursing the sick and dying were themselves overtaken with death, the preacher, Henry Lauber, wrote: 'The enemies of the Jesuits in Constance cannot deny that at the time of infection, when all the world was nearly frantic with terror, they (the Jesuits) showed themselves courageous helpers of the poor sick people, for which they deserve praise, however much we may disagree with them otherwise.' In a chronicle of Hall it is said: 'During the plague the Jesuits were especially assiduous in giving spiritual and temporal help to the patients, and in this service of love three Fathers fell victims to death.'[2] Among the Protestants magisterial decrees were actually issued forbidding people either to visit the sick or to accompany their corpses to the grave. When Duke Wolfgang of Zweibrücken issued a command of this sort on December 2, 1563, the preachers of the district of Lichtenberg, greatly to their honour, represented to the Duke that it was unnatural, unloving and unchristian not to nurse and comfort anyone.[3] 'Woe unto the sick among us evangelicals at the time of the heavy epidemic,' said the above-mentioned preacher, Henry Lauber, in the second decade of the seventeenth century; 'how very few there are

[1] Haggemüller, *Gesch. von Kempten*, ii. 82.

[2] See our statements, vol. ix. 328 ff., where there are also fuller details concerning the charitable labours of the Jesuits. ** See also vol. xiv. pp. 73 ff. and 79 ff.

[3] [J. G. Faber] *Stoff für denkünftigen Verfasser kemer pfalz-zweibrückischen Kirchengesch*, ii. 24, 53, 60–63.

among us willing and glad to help them; are not most of our people, who by reason of their faith ought to have more courage than the Papists, full of fear and terror of death?—most of them actually leave their nearest blood relations, father, mother, child, alone and comfortless in sickness and death.'[1]

Concerning this strange phenomenon, unknown among the Catholics in the past, George Wizel had already remarked: 'Is it not the greatest shame that those who, as followers of the Antichrist (to use their language) did not fear the plague at all, or at any rate very little, now as Christians show such an overwhelming dread of death? Scarcely anyone visits the sick any more, nobody dares go near those who are stricken with the plague. Nobody will even look at them from a distance, and everybody is seized with paralysing fear. What has become of that faith, so often vaunted of nowadays, which can do all things, where is our love for our neighbour? Tell me, pray, in the name of Christ, if there has ever been less kindness, less love among Christians than nowadays?'[1] Luther himself is the best voucher for these facts. When in 1539 an infectious disease broke out in Wittenberg, he wrote to Wenceslaus Link: 'One after another they are all fleeing away, and one cannot get either a bleeder or an attendant. I think the devil must have possessed the people; they are all so disgracefully timid and frightened that brother forsakes brother, and sons their parents': he was pleased to see in all this a judgment of God 'for contempt of the Evangel and for devouring greed.' In a letter to the preacher, Conrad Cordatus, he mentions the same facts, but seeks a different explanation

[1] *Von Wercken christlicher Barmherzigkeit*, Bl. C. [2] Döllinger, i. 64–65.

for them. 'Here too great mercilessness towards relations has been shown, which has caused me unspeakable grief, and has tried me almost more than was good for me. It is quite a new and out of the way plague that has come this time, for Satan, while visiting few with the disease, is as it were striking all to the ground with overwhelming terror and driving them to flight; verily, this is something preposterous, and an entirely new manifestation under the bright and mighty shining of the Evangel.'[1]

The whole system of poor relief was grievously affected by the seizure and the dissipation of Church goods and of innumerable charitable bequests intended not only for parochial and church use but also for hospitals, schools and poor-houses.

Luther had already in 1523 expressed the fear that 'the Church goods would come to be scrambled for, and that each one would grab what he liked, as had happened in Bohemia.'[2] The year before Thomas Murner had predicted concerning the plunder of Church goods:

For when the goods they all have taken,
And a mighty heap have maken,
The poor will get as fair a lot
As poor men in Bohemia got.
There too the people thought to reap
An equal portion of the heap;
But lo! the rich man took the whole
And left the poor man making dole.[3]

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[1] De Wette, v. 218–219, 225–226; see v. 134–135, how he sought to comfort his friend Nicholas Amsdorf (November 25, 1538), who was witness in Magdeburg of the same facts. Further see Döllinger's explanations, i. 345–348, and our remarks, vol. xiv. pp. 57 ff., and their confirmation by Paulus, 'Die Vernachlässigung der Pestkranken im 16ten Jahrhundert,' in the *Katholik*, 1895, ii. 380 ff.

[2] Collected Works, xxii. 107, 110. [3] See our remarks, vol. xi. p. 341 f.

Later on Luther said that everybody 'wanted to grow fat on the plunder and robbery of Church goods.'[1] 'The devil,' he wrote, 'is trying his hand with all classes, to make them deal dishonestly with the Church goods and the common funds. Great lords keep house with the Church goods clearly intended for better purposes. What the ancestors gave and bequeathed abundantly for the poor, they want to keep for themselves and spend as they like.' 'The same with burghers and peasants and that which they ought to give to their pastors: one sees how unfaithfully they act. Hence it follows, as the prophet Malachi threatened, that God's wrath is so manifest, that everybody, the great lords as well as the burghers and peasants, is reduced to beggary through these said goods. This could well be borne, were it not for the concomitant evil that schools and churches fall away and the poor people are sadly neglected. This is the work of the devil incarnate, who sees how it will all end.' In every principality, every town, every village, Luther said, 'there was need for people who would deal honestly with the Church goods, who would have regard not to their own wants and avarice, but to the necessities of those to whom the goods by right belonged,' namely, the ministers of the Church, the poor, and indigent boys with capacity for study. 'The great misfortune is that we have no people of this sort, honest, Godfearing, and capable, to entrust with this management.'[2]

The treatment of the Church ministers, the pastors and preachers grieved Luther most deeply. 'No one

[1] ** In 1530 Luther complained that: 'Every peasant, who just knew how to count five, grabbed to himself fields, meadows, and forests from the cloisters.'—Collected Works, xlvii. 229.

[2] Collected Works, iii. 270–271.

gives anything to these men,' he said, 'and what's more, the little they have is taken out of their mouths by the scandalous, ungrateful world, the princes, nobles, burghers and peasants, so that they and their poor wives and children are obliged to suffer want and misery, and they leave destitute widows and orphans behind them.'[1] 'We see everywhere how the official people, the tax-gatherers, the judges, the burghers, the peasants, and their workpeople treat these servants of God; they hold them cheaper and lower than cowherds and swineherds.'[2] 'So too do the nobles proceed and appropriate for themselves the church benefices. We handed over to them the great abbey and Church goods only in order that they might provide for the pastorates, but they do not do this.'[3] 'The nobles exact the most menial secular services from their pastors, they turn them into calefactors and stove-heaters, messengers and letter-carriers, they rob them of the tithes and incomes to which they look for sustenance of their families, and all the time these nobles are good evangelicals!' 'It is a matter of daily experience,' he says in another place, 'that nobody, neither burghers, peasants or nobles, gives gladly nowadays a farthing to the Evangel and the preachers, yea verily, they all of them much prefer to rob the poor churches of all that was given them of old.' In the villages the pastors were actually obliged to tend the cows and pigs like the peasants. 'The pastors and preachers are not only despised, they are also badly treated.'[4]

[1] Collected Works, xiii. 208.
[2] Collected Works, iii. 47, 48.
[3] Collected Works, lxii. 293–294.
[4] Collected Works, vi. 182, 325; cf. 214.

Luther stands by no means alone with his complaints.

'Never before,' wrote Melanchthon in 1528, 'has the attitude of the world been so unfriendly and odious as to-day. Some folk, who pretend to be strongly evangelical, take possession of the goods which were given for parsonages, pulpits, schools and churches, without which we should at last become pagans. The common people refuse their pastors their dues, and those indeed chiefly who boast most of being evangelical.[1]

'The ungrateful world,' wrote John Winistede, 'behaves as a rule in such a way to the pious, faithful preachers, that while they are serving and working, they have scarcely anything to eat. But when they become infirm and ill, and die, their poor wives and children must go about asking for bread, and are in fact reduced to beggary.'[2]

'The first poor Lazarus,' preached Nicholas Selnekker in 1580, 'is the churches which ought to be so helped and looked after that poor pastors and preachers may properly fulfil their office and have sufficient maintenance. For we see, alas! and experience in many places that many poor pastors with their great and arduous work have difficulty in feeding themselves and their families.'[3]

'It is a dire extremity,' said the preacher, Hartmann Braun, 'when preachers are fed with dogs' crusts, and

[1] *Unterricht Phil. Melanchthon wider die Lere der Wiederteufer aus dem Latein verteutschet durch Justus Jonas.* Wittenberg, 1528, D. 3[b]. ** Luther's friend, Paul Eber, complains that the ministers of the Church are denuded and left to starve, and prophesies that future times will show how little blessing spoliation brought those who 'warmed and fed themselves on Church goods.'—Sixt, 26.

[2] *Kurtze Anzeigung*, Bl. H[b]. [3] Selnekker, *Drei Predigten*, E. iii.

their children have only a scrap of bread to break, so long as the fathers are alive.'[1]

Even if some of the preachers were liberally remunerated[2] their number was small in the extreme. Even in Nuremberg the incumbent and the chaplain of St. Sebald and St. Laurence complained to the council that they had suffered, and still were suffering, great scarcity in their daily food, so that at times they had to endure bodily weakness and sickness, and could not get necessary help.'[3] The theologian, John Knipstro, said that as preacher at Stralsund he would have been obliged to beg from door to door if his wife had not earned something by embroidery. The Superintendent, John Frederus, in 1547, presented to the Stralsund Council a pamphlet 'Von dem rechten Gebrauch und Missbrauch geistlicher Güter,' in which he begged urgently 'that at least necessary provision should be made for preachers starving with their wives and children:'[4] the Church and the poor were being robbed.[5]

It was indeed 'a great and atrocious sin,' said several professors of the Rostock University in a petition to the Dukes of Mecklenburg, 'that numbers of lords,

[1] Braun, *Zehn christliche Predigten*, 116.

[2] See above p. 457, what the Abbot of St. Michael's in Lüneburg wrote. For the way in which Bugenhagen let himself be bribed, see Paulsen, 186, n. 1.

[3] Waldau, *Vermischte Beiträge*, iv. 445–448.

[4] Kosegarten, i. 177, 195.

[5] As regards individual cases he said: the preacher Andrew Winter has a yearly stipend of 30 gulden; on this sum he could not keep his house decently. The preacher Alexander Grote had only 23 gulden a year, out of which he had to pay 10 gulden for house rent, so that he had only 13 left for other expenses. When a preacher faithfully fulfilled his office he was blamed, abused and criticised, every mouthful he ate was counted up, and scarce a handful of respect was bestowed on him.—John Frederus, i. 33-34.

in former times, had taken possession of the charitable foundations, whereby the churches all over the country, and especially in the villages, had been reduced to a lamentable condition.'[1] In order simply to keep alive, the preacher at Gnoien in Mecklenburg, for instance, was obliged in addition to his spiritual office to fill the post of *chef de cuisine* and tax-collector to a prince.[2] A Wesenberg Church inspectoral protocol of 1568 complained that the Church revenues which the squires had not taken possession of were drunk away in beer by the peasants.[3]

In Pomerania-Stettin, in 1540, Duke Barnim XI. found 'from daily experience that the property in lands, capital, tithes and other usufructs, which in the past had belonged to the parish churches, had been diverted by the patrons or founders to other purposes, or stolen by other persons; that capital loans and interest on loans were kept back by the debtors in spite of all calls and summonses: a 'sudden collapse' of Church administration was threatening.'[4]

'It has alas, come about,' said the Elector Joachim II. of Brandenburg in 1558, 'that each one would gladly have a piece of the garment of Jesus, and many people do all diligence, under whatever pretext they can, to get hold of and enrich themselves with the Church possessions.'[5] 'In opposition to the divine law prescribed to all alike,' says a decree of the Elector John George in 1573, 'each one tried to get possession for himself of the Church goods and revenues which our dear parents

[1] Krabbe, *Universität*, i. 567, note. [2] Franck, ix. 181. [3] Boll, i. 206.

[4] Dähnert, ii. 575. Concerning the dissipation of Church goods in Barth see *Baltische Studien*, i. 196. ** See also Spahn, *Verfassungs- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte des Herzogtums Pommern*, p. 111.

[5] Mylius, i.[a] 268.

and forefathers, out of Christian piety gave for the benefit of churches and schools; people presume, (sometimes with violence) to take from the parsonages their farms, fields, meadows, and woods, their tithes, rents and dues; the village pastors especially are deprived of all that wherewith they should sustain their poor wives and children, and they dare not for very fear complain; sometimes indeed they are unable to do so; a special attorney-general should be appointed to proceed against the criminals.' [1]

In the villages and the small towns things were at the worst. In 1555 for instance, Erasmus Sarcerius reported, from his own personal experience, in the Mansfeld district amongst others: 'The great lords endeavour to appropriate the feudal rights and feudal possessions of the clergy and allow their officials and justices to take forcible action. The parsonages are going to ruin and the farm buildings belonging to them stand empty. The administration of Church property is just as bad. The revenues of the Churches are frequently not paid, nor does anybody call them in. Church capital is spent in making roads and bridges and giving banquets, and it is lent from hand to hand without hypothecary security. The nobles in particular are responsible for the unpaid Church tithes and revenues, and as to voluntary donations to churches and benevolent foundations, they are quite out of fashion. Nobles and burghers treat the endowments of their forbears as if they were their own property, just as if they had not been given for the honour and glory of God.

[1] Mylius, i[a]. 299, 335, 337. Concerning the confiscation and dissipation of the Church goods in the Brandenburg district see our remarks, vol. vi. 57 ff.

Distant parishes are often amalgamated so that it is not possible for one central authority to manage them. For how can old pastors preach on Sundays in three or even four churches? The pastors meanwhile are as poor as mice. Bread and water is their sole diet; and many of them indeed are obliged to buy the water they drink.' [1]

'Where formerly,' wrote the Lutheran, Anton Praetorius in 1602, 'there were two or three preachers, now there is scarcely one. Our forefathers built abbeys, cloisters, churches and hermitages, and endowed them richly with yearly rents and revenues, so that there might be no lack of Church services and Church ministers.' These churches have been confiscated, and their revenues have been spent, but not for legitimate purposes. 'As King Belshazzar at his lordly banquet feasted with his mighty captains and his wives out of the plundered gold vessels of the temple, and drank himself drunk, so also are the great ones of the present day doing. In order that they may have grand houses and servants, Christ must be deprived of what is His own.' [2]

Ceaselessly, from all Protestant lands and towns there went forth complaints concerning the plunder of churches and of the poor, and countless voices testified to the already palpable results of this robbery of God.

'Of old,' said Deacon Eckhard Lüncker in Marburg, in 1554, in a funeral sermon, 'the ministers of churches and the poor people were fed and maintained by the

[1] *Zeitschr. des Harzvereins*, xx. 522–523.

[2] Prätorius, 169–170. 'I know several pastors of whom the one has 5, the other 6, the third 8, the fourth 10, 12 or even more villages (besides the fields and meadows, from which he has to feed himself), to look after: some of these places he seldom visits, others never, and the inhabitants also cannot get to him.

tithes, but in our own days these sources of income are strangely dispersed, distributed here and there and anywhere except among the ministers of God and the poor whose property they are.' [1]

'When the change in religion took place,' wrote Wolfgang Kaufmann, deacon at Mansfeld in 1565, everybody made a grab at the Church goods; they seized all the endowments in the shape of fields, meadows, woods, vineyards and houses, which had been intended for churches, schools and hospitals, divided them amongst each other and sold them, giving the clergy in return but meagre and uncertain pensions: they took away a certainty and left only an uncertainty in its place.[2]

In the Palatinate, the Lutheran Church inspectors appointed by the Elector Otto Henry, in a memorandum addressed to him on November 8, 1556, pointed out as regards the Church goods that: 'Many persons both of high and low degree had sinned grievously before God and aroused His fierce anger against them, in that they had gotten into their own hands the possessions which had been given, once for all, to God and to His Church, and that they left poor servants of the Church to suffer hunger and need, wherefrom it resulted not only that the services of the Church were despised, but also from want of ministers, altogether given up.' 'Experience,' they went on, 'already, alas! showed, with grievous injury and disgrace to the German nation, how little such plundered Church property had benefited those who had stolen it, whether the robbers were of higher or lower status: not only had they not grown richer through their robberies, but they had grown poorer, and

[1] Döllinger, ii. 207 note. [2] Döllinger, ii. 285.

were obliged sometimes to mortgage and encumber their lands.' The Elector's Catholic ancestors had acted better. 'They had been rich and powerful electors and rulers,' said the Lutheran inspectors, 'rich in lands and in people, although they had not taken to themselves the Church goods, but on the contrary had administered them for the benefit of the Church, and had richly endowed the churches from their own means.' [1]

'Formerly,' said Andrew Musculus in a sermon in 1555, 'princes and lords were so rich that without taking Church property and without oppressing their subjects with taxes, they were able to build such great buildings —cloisters, abbeys, hospitals—as we now see standing, in addition to which they waged great wars, and they still had large funds left over. Nowadays princes and lords take back again what their grandfathers gave to the Church, oppress their subjects, and still have nothing. In those times one man alone was able to erect a town, a church, or other large edifices, such as we now admire and wonder at, but which a whole country now is unable to produce.' Formerly monks and clergy, in great numbers, were richly provided for, and yet the burghers and peasants had plenty left over and remained rich people. 'Nowadays the nobles take the farms and meadows away from the churches, the peasants give nothing, the burghers hold the benefices and the foundations—and yet nobody has anything, and all are beggars compared to our forefathers.' [2]

It was not, however, only the churches and their ministers that were robbed by the confiscation and dissipation of the Church goods, but also, as all

[1] Schmidt, *Anteil der Strassburger*, 50–51.

[2] In the 'Hosenteufel' in Scheible, *Schaltjahr*, ii. 404–405.

Protestant lands and towns unceasingly vociferated, 'the poor and the sick and all sorts of indigent people who no longer benefited by the charitable endowments and gifts of the past. Hence the wrath and vengeance of God must inevitably follow this robbery of God.

'All Germany,' wrote Nicholas Medler, superintendent at Brunswick in 1546, 'stands in jeopardy on account of this robbery. For God will surely punish this wickedness of men by destruction and devastation greater than has ever been heard of.'

In the same town the superintendent, Joachim Mörlin, inveighed against the 'Julian (the Apostate) devil' of the evangelical Church-robbers in the words: 'Go to, go to, be you who you may who have grabbed unto yourselves the Church goods, little or much, secretly or openly; you have laid up for yourselves a dire judgment, you have hung a heavy burden on your souls and consciences, for which you will have to answer at the judgment day of God.' All the pious foundations of our forefathers were being wrenched away, under the clear light of the Evangel, in churches and in schools God's possessions were being torn out of His hands,' &c. In short: usury, public theft and other great sins are heinous transgressions, but they do not injure as much, by a long way, as this abominable vice of Church-robbery.' 'Because the sin is too monstrous, God must and will soon intervene with grimmest wrath, and tighten your emptied money-girdles round your waist until you are crushed to the ground. 'Be your blood over your neck!'[1]

'I have seen,' wrote the preacher Lampadius at Halberstadt in 1559, 'how in some principalities,

[1] Hortleder, *Von Rechtmässigkeit*, v. 1382-1383.

counties and towns, the churches, schools and poor funds have been, and still are, tampered with, given away, drunk up, eaten up, misused in all sorts of ways.' All sorts of trickery and blasphemy is carried on with these Church goods. But those who deal thus criminally with the churches, the schools and the poor, they have fire in their own houses, as the prophet Micah said, and are burnt up by it.'

'At the courts of great princes also,' said the Protestant jurist Melchior Krüger, syndicus of the town of Brunswick, all these goods are a fire-brand in their coffers and treasuries, and bring one calamity after another on land and people, so that with all their scraping and grabbing they are no richer one day than another.' 'It would indeed be a pity,' he adds, 'if they did grow more prosperous.'

Erasmus Alberus said: 'They take away the goods of the churches and the poor, and leave the needy to suffer want; they take the bread out of their mouths, fleece them to the bone, in a way unheard of before, and they will have to answer in hell for the blood of the poor.' [1]

With equal fearlessness Nicholas Selnekker spoke of the 'blood-suckers and church-despoilers' who, caring nothing for churches, schools and poor people, rob and plunder and parade about with the riches and booty which they have gotten to themselves by violence or cunning: what they gave away of the spoil was a drop in the ocean: 'they give a fly and take a camel, or if they give a paltry farthing they steal a horse.' [2]

[1] Winistede, *Kurtze Anzeigung*, Bl. B 1-2, J $2^{b}$-3. Hortleder, *Von Rechtmässigkeit*, v. 1381-1384, 1400-1401. See our remarks, vol. vi. 525 ff.

[2] Döllinger, ii. 344.

The preacher Bartholomew Ringwalt said in his poem on times and customs 'Die lauter Wahrheit' (1585): 'With robber hands they seize the great and small, which our pious ancestors founded in the dour sweat of their toil; they care neither for the hospitals nor the schools in which the children of the poor can be educated, and as a righteous punishment for their sin they will be ruined in house, hoards and land.' [1]

'One could easily name seven or eight princely houses, or houses of counts,' said the court-preacher Basilius Sattler in 1618, 'which have become quite extinct in consequence of their having turned ecclesiastical property to mundane uses.' [2]

Special attention is deserved by a pamphlet, which the preacher John Winistede published in 1560, under the title 'Wider die Kirchendiebe jetziger Zeit,' and in which he invoked the judgment of heaven on all those who not only stole from the churches and the charitable institutions all that with which the rich had in former times endowed them, but who also took away what poor widows had rung from the distaff and what poor artisans had spared from their scanty meals, often to the detriment of their own heirs! 'They grab it all to themselves as though it was their own, drink and make merry with it, to the great injury and distress of the poor.' [3]

'And if they do leave some portion of these confiscated church goods to the convent schools, they only do so (as indeed the work in these schools betrays in many places), for a pretence, as if they were doing

[1] See present work, vol. xi. 363–366.

[2] Sattler, *Gesch. des Fürstentums Hannover*, i. 415.

[3] *Kurtze Anzeigung*, Bl. E.

something grand. And therefore nobody is so much benefited by these said convents and their goods as the tax collector and administrators who are already rich enough. But of the way in which the poor teachers and boys are treated, fed and clothed out of the funds, many pious people are already too well aware.' [1]

Winistede inveighed in the most immoderate and passionate language against 'the Romish, satanic synagogues and their daughters, that is to say the abbeys and convents'; he demanded that 'all Church goods should be taken away from the papists; [2] but 'threefold worse,' he said, 'than the papists were the tyrants and oppressors of the present day, who under the pretext of the Evangel divided the Church goods amongst them.' 'They sell these to have and to hold as if they were their own, transfer, mortgage, give them away, bestow them as rewards on their servants or other unworthy persons, lend them to their court parasites, who dress, drink and gorge extravagantly out of them, and do little or nothing in return for them,' and so forth. 'We ought to pray against them in the words of the eighty-third Psalm: "O my God make them like a wheel; as the stubble before the wind." It would serve them right if the Turks, the French, the Spaniards, the Muscovites, or any other tyrants were to plunder, rob or consume them with fire, and avenge their robberies and thefts.' [3]

If we consider all these utterances of Protestant contemporaries (and their number might easily be doubled and trebled), we shall find full justification for what was said on the Catholic side in 1577 in a 'Klage der Armen und Dürftigen wider die, so entweder unter dem herrlichen Schein des heiligen Evangelii oder auch unter

[1] Bl. D. 2[b]. [2] Bl. C 2[b] ff., D 2. [3] Bl. G 3.

Titel und Namen, dass sie es wollen besser anlegen als die Geistlichen, die Kirchengüter gewaltiglich zu sich reissen.' [1]

'In a criminal manner,' says this complaint, 'the Church goods were confiscated, the endowments and donations which our ancestors gave for the benefit of the poor, taken away: and now, too, benevolence and mercy are withdrawn, just when there are more poor than ever on the earth, and all deeds of charity ought to flourish.'

'Besides which, all clerical fiefs that have fallen in through death have been seized and diverted: they were true alms funds and intended for that purpose, but they have been either given or taken away. The poor very rarely get any profit out of them, but the poor have to pay the rent on them, which they never did before.' Likewise the Church jewels, which had been given in former days by rich and poor, were carried off, but no profit accrued to the poor from them.'

'It was said indeed that the donations and suchlike had been put into the common coffer, out of which they would be distributed among the poor; but nobody knew what was done with the money. How could the founders find out whether you always distribute their common funds, or what you do? You cause a great deal of suspicion, and many a one must wonder what becomes of his donation. Would it not have been more Christian and upright if you had left the above-mentioned great alms funds alone to be used as was originally intended, especially as many hundreds of people were then gladdened by them whereas now only a few get anything?' Some insignificant rents go indeed to the poor-chest, but the fat ones go to the

[1] Ingolstadt, 6 pp.

vaults and cellars of the rich. The coffer has become the coffin of Church goods; the poor may look on, but they are not for them.

'If the priests are no longer to have the Church lands, then neither ought you to have them, for they are less suitable to you, and were intended for them. Who then is to have them? I answer: Give them to the poor. What sort of a Christian are you, to take what does not belong to you?' and so forth.

'But granted,' the author goes on,' that all the endowments do go into the coffers. Whose is the credit? Yours or the founder's? It cannot be yours, for the endowments are not yours, and you have not contributed a penny or a farthing to them, but have only taken what others gave. The ancestors put in and you take out. The ancestors filled the coffers and you empty them. And if it is evangelical to put money into your coffers, none were so evangelical as the ancestors, because they gave the most. . . . Which is the most evangelical, to give or to take? God's Word shall answer us from Acts xx., 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' According to this our ancestors were more blessed than you are. You might indeed have boasted of your coffers if you had filled them with your own cash without the help of other people's money. But it is the same with these as with almost everything else, namely, that whatever good your sect can boast of you have got from the Church,' &c., &c.

'The stolen convent and Church goods,' the same author says elsewhere, in 1578, 'have turned to dust, and the curse of God lies on them, as the Protestant themselves declare by hundreds. Is it the poor perchance who have taken them? Has poverty become

less, and not rather more crushing and more common by far than it was before the religious dissensions, in the times of uniform Christian faith? Ask this question wherever you will in German lands, you will get but one answer, and you can see it for yourself in villages and towns.[1]

At any rate poverty had by no means grown lighter in the course of the sixteenth century, but much more crushing and universal, and the begging and vagrant system, which people had tried to root out, had become one of the greatest plagues of the land, and grew worse from year to year.

The terrible effects of the peasant war, in the districts where it had raged, were such 'as in all futurity could never be effaced in the Holy Empire.'[2] The war was followed by ten years of scarcity and dearness, a term never equalled in past times. Sebastian Franck wrote on the subject in 1531: 'The great dearness still goes on at the present day and prices rise higher and higher as regards all the necessaries of life. Many people ascribe this state of things to the fraudulence and the usurious forestalling of those who buy up everything that the common people have. Then when they have it in their

[1] See our statements, vol. vii. 90 ff. ** See further the pamphlet *Wie und wass massen Gott der Herr zu allen Zeiten gestraffet hab die, so freventlich, wider recht, fug und billichkeit Geistliche Güter eingezogen, Kirchen und Klöster beraubt und entunehret haben. Durch ainen gutherzigen christlichen und catholischen beschriben* (Ingolstadt, 1560) Here (Bl. $H^{a-b}$), it is said: 'It is a fact beyond all doubt and a matter of daily experience that one single convent which has remained unattacked and unimpaired in its old conditions is of more profit and help to the poor tenants, indoor-poor and artisans, than are ten convents that have fallen into the hands and the power of the tyrants.' See Paulus, *Hoffmeister*, 327 ff.; the same author's pamphlet on Usingen, 89 ff., and the article on Lorichius in the *Katholik*, 1894, i. 520.

[2] See our remarks, vol. iv. 344 ff.

grip, the poor man has to pay their arbitrary price. Formerly no period of high prices was of more than a year or half a year's duration. In 1527 wine rose quickly from 5 fl. a firkin, to 25 and 30 fl.; corn also rose rapidly, but almost as quickly fell again. Nowadays in this dishonest world high prices cannot be stopped, to such an extent is everything overcharged and gambled with.' But the want and distress came from other causes also: 'Because the common people are such spendthrifts, and so extravagant, and always saddle themselves with expenses beyond what they can earn or afford, live from day to day and are so evangelical —please God!—that they have nothing left over.' 'The farmers, who in such times of distress should come to the rescue, have nothing themselves, for in good years they have spent and wasted their profits and are now indebted to the ground-lords.'

'If in the good years people saved up the overplus and if the common people were not so extravagant in food, drink, dress and feasting, all this misery and dishonesty might be overcome.'[1]

Later on the Smalcald war 'inflicted such injuries on the very foremost and richest towns that they never recovered.' 'Thus Augsburg, which had lost nearly 3,000,000 gulden by this war, never revived again after this time. In 1553, 'whereas there was scarcely any ready money among the people, and the yearly revenues hardly sufficed to cover the great expenses of each day,' the town was obliged to borrow money from noble families and merchants.

In 1569, apart from the 'numerous other beggars,' '1700 persons were given alms in the loan house, the

[1] *Chronik*, 724 ff.

next year the number of recipients of charity rose 4000.[1] The council of Memmingen wrote on November 30, 1553, to George Besserer of Ulm that the town had been plunged into such insolvency, poverty and ruin, so loaded with taxes that the expenditure was greater than the receipts, and it had been necessary to sell the great revenues which they had from lands.[2] Frankfort-on-the-Maine motioned in 1547 for a diminution of its imperial tax in proportion to its 'present reduced means.' Already before, when the town was still in a flourishing condition this tax had been 'high and oppressive,' now however it was no longer endurable in view of the manifold and great expenses by which the town had been exhausted and the heavy debts with which it was burdened, and also the overwhelming damage it had suffered from both the armies through incendiarism and quartering of the soldiers.[3]

Greater still were the ravages of lands and towns by the 'evangelical war' of the Margrave Albert of Brandenburg-Culmbach,[4] and later on by the wars in the Netherlands, the inroads of the Dutch and Spaniards laying everything waste.[5] 'Owing to the continuous disturbances, conflicts, plunderings, raids, bad harvests and imperial taxes,' wrote the Elector John Adam of Mayence on January 3, 1603, 'most of the territory is so exhausted that not only can the rulers scarcely make their way, but the subjects have little else than dry bread

[1] v. Stetten, i. 405, 500, 589, 592.

[2] In the *Frankfort Archives, Mittelgewölbe*, D. 43, Fol. 318, No. 1.

[3] 'Instruktion des Rates für Ogier v. Melem,' in the *Frankfort Archives, Mittelgewölbe*, D. 42, No. 21., Fol. 199.

[4] See our statements, vol. vi. 449 ff.

[5] See our statements, vol. ix. 236–242; and Stieve, *Die Politik Bayerns*, ii. 298 ff.

to eat, and the old imperial taxes cannot be collected, still less the new ones, unless a house-to-house visitation is instituted and a general insurrection thus risked.'[1]

'On account of the Dutch and other wars,' says a pamphlet of 1598, 'commerce and business have decreased, with the result that the revenues, taxes and other dues of the princes, counts and lords are daily diminishing. Smartness in dress (which the foreigners have introduced) is gaining the upper hand; all necessaries of life, which are brought from a distance, and which cannot be dispensed with, become dearer every day. Whereas everyone wishes to, and indeed must, live according to his station, the subjects are hard pressed, and for the princes, counts and lords, of whom there are so many and whose number daily increases, their own country is too small and contracted. It is the same with the nobles, of whom there are also such a large number, and who multiply at such a rate that they do not know what they are to live upon, and on account of the number of their children (although many of them are wealthy), with all their revenues they cannot make both ends meet. And in some principalities where bond-service—a fruitful source of poverty for land and people as experience shows—is in vogue, the poor people are so grievously plagued and oppressed that they can scarcely find means to earn a bit of bread for their wives and children. The artisans and journeymen in the towns, who are so numerous and become daily more so, to such an extent that they take the food out of each others' mouths, can hardly manage to live.'[2]

[1] Stieve, *Die Politik Bayerns*, ii. 628, n. 4. ** In the year 1597 the Westphalian circle complained that since the last imperial Diet it had lost 1,000,000 gulden.—Häberlin, xxi. 267.

[2] Stieve, *Die Politik Bayerns*, ii. 301.

How the debts even of towns formerly the richest grew and multiplied is shown for instance by Nuremberg. Before the war with the Margrave Albert of Brandenburg-Culmbach the municipal debt of this town amounted to 453,000 gulden; in 1600, owing to the decline of commerce and the block in all industries, it reached the height of 3,475,000 gulden; in 1618, before the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War, it was up at 4,904,000.[1] The Hanseatic towns were in a similar condition of decline and increasing insolvency.[2]

Added to wars and tumults, to the decline of commerce and industry, to the continually increasing falsification of coinage, there were pestilential diseases, which had never been so frequent as in the sixteenth century, and which carried off thousands of victims and spread misery and want all around.[3] Not seldom these diseases were the result of periods of scarcity and starvation, during which all sorts of things injurious to health were used as food. Thus, for instance, in Bavaria in the years 1570–1572, when there were bad harvests and frightful dearness, plagues spread all over the country.[4] From similar causes there developed in the Lüneburg district in 1581, in the Silesian mountains in 1588–1593, in Hesse in 1596 'a poisonous, infectious malady, unknown before in these lands, the so-called raphania, or spasms, leaving after it epilepsy, catalepsy, and

[1] Soden, *Kriegs- und Sittengesch. Nürnbergs*, i., ii., and iii. 392; cf. i. 376.

[2] See above pp. 4–19.

[3] See vol. xiv. 63 ff. Concerning the plague in Wittenberg in the years 1527–1530, see the letters of contemporaries in Buchwald, *Zur Wittenberger Stadt- und Universitätsgesch*, S. iii. 5–23, 36 ff., 44 ff., 82. ff., 109. Again in the years 1538–1539, *l.c.* pp. 139 ff.

[4] Westenrieder, *Neue Beiträge*, i. 304; concerning the universal dearness, see Gumpelzhaimer, ii. 948, 989.

insanity.[1] 'How,' said a preacher in 1571, 'how should people, the poor especially, escape all sorts of contagious diseases in these constant times of dearness and famine when they eat God knows what unwholesome, disgusting food, rotten corn, the flesh of dogs and cats, and suchlike improper things? And even in better years what do the poor get to eat? Are not all food commodities adulterated in the most fraudulent manner?'[2] 'To the question, Why in many parts of Germany there are lepers, plagues and plague-houses? I answer,' wrote the Tyrolese physician Hippolytus Guarinoni, 'chiefly because of the unclean animal food which is generally given to the poor, because it is feared that the more important folk might discover the fraud and the miscreants come to merited punishment.'[3]

'This,' wrote Thomas Rorarius, preacher at Giengen, in 1572, 'is the complaint uttered nowadays: Ah, God, that things should have become so miserable in our lands. There is no longer any settled peace, any happiness, blessing or hope in the world; wherever one turns one finds lamentation and woe. If you go to Bavaria everything is dear; if you go to Suabia things are still dearer; if you seek for peace you find war.' 'An impatient man of the world might well say: I wish I had never been born, or that I had died long ago, rather than suffer myself and see my wife and children suffer such misery as is going on all over the world.' 'After a meal that has cost two, three or more batzen

[1] Sprengel, iii. 107–111. See our remarks, vol. xiv. 74.

[2] *Predig über Hunger- und Sterbejahre von einem Diener am Wort* (1571), Bl. 2.

[3] Guarinoni, 747.

ne still feels hungry, whereas a few years ago one ould have an excellent meal for one batzen. If you ink anything nowadays it does you no good, for the ink is either adulterated, or else otherwise inferior: few years ago this or that wine was the very best; you drank half a measure, you had had enough, as oth stomach and head witnessed, and you were merry nd good-humoured after it, now however these same ines are the very worst, or at any rate not worth much, nd yet they're dear enough with a vengeance. It is ne same, too, with all trade and industry: everything, ood or bad, gets dearer day by day.'[1] The, soil too, deteriorating; the vineyards no longer produce such ood wine, the fields do not yield as much hay and orn, nor the trees as much fruit as a few years go.'[2]

'I find,' said Polycarpus Leiser, in a speech at Torgau 1605, 'that food is deteriorating very much and hat everything is double the price it used to be. Indeed ne can scarcely procure the necessaries of life. The alls are empty of cattle, the waters of fish, the birds the air are scarce, burghers and peasants grow oor. Food fails, pride augments; in swilling, sousing

[1] *Fünfundzwanzig Predigten*, Bl. 60ᵇ–61; 39ᵇ, 41. 'The people say w: "Since the Evangel came in, all good things have gone out."' When God punished men for their sins with poverty and hunger, body would put up with such punishment for the love of the Gospel, t there was only impatience, murmuring and blasphemy against God d His Word.' Andrew Lang in the 'Sorge-Teufel,' *Theatr. Diabol.*, 5; cf. 537.

[2] Bl. 47ᵇ. Among his coreligionists Rorarius heard the following talk: o long as we lived under the papacy, and did homage to the dear saints th masses, pilgrimages and so forth, we had a golden time and plenty all. Since that time, however, now that we have forsaken the papacy d the service of the saints and adopted the new doctrine, everything s gone to ruin and we have no morsel to gnaw or to bite.' Bl. 76ᵇ.

and gorging we do not neglect the least tittle.'[1] 'Hundreds are asking for the reasons,' said the already mentioned preacher in 1571, 'why in lands, towns and villages, everything is palpably deteriorating and going to ruin; one gives this reason, another that, but most of the causes are open as the day; there are wars and devastation, incendiarism, bad crops, starvation, plagues and pestilence, stoppage of trade and industry, insecurity of roadways, miserable justice, draining of the subjects by taxation, immoderate tolls, cheating of all sorts in the currency, so that one can scarcely any longer get a good pfennig, and on the top of all this, as though all the world were out of its senses, there is splendour and luxury in dress, in every class beyond its means, and no less extravagance in gluttonous eating and drinking, as if people were bound to throw away whatever they have in their hands. Tell me, moreover, how many there are who are willing to do honest work, and who do not much prefer to go about begging and to live at the expense of others? Have not beggars become innumerable as though they came up from the bowels of the earth?' 'Another by no means slight cause of all this poverty and ruin is the countless number of lightly contracted marriages, when people come together and beget children without knowing where they will get food for them, and so come down themselves in body and soul, and bring their children up to begging from their earliest years.' 'I cannot approve of this sort of thing that Luther has written,' said a preacher: "A lad should marry when he is 20, a maiden when she is 15 or 18, and leave

[1] *Landtagspredigt*, 31, 41.

it to God to arrange how they will maintain their children." No, people should not think of marrying, and the magistrates should not allow them to do so, before they are sure of being able at least to provide their families with the necessaries of life, for else, as experience shows, a miserable, degenerate race is produced.' [1]

George Engelhart Löhneiss, who examined closely into the causes of this general poverty, attributed it very largely to the universal growth of usury and to the 'numerous innovations, and all the fresh pretexts devised for multiplying taxes, by which the people were so oppressed and drained that they had to pay away all that they managed to earn and scrape together.' 'But that God should allow so much taxation

[1] *Predig über Hunger- und Sterbejahre*, Bl. 4. Respecting this injunction of Luther (Collected Works, xx. 85 ff.), and the still more extreme one of Eberlin von Günzburg: 'As soon as a girl is 15, and a boy 18, they should be given to each other in marriage,' Oscar Jolles remarks, 196: 'These demands are obviously not practicable from the economic point of view, but from the ethical standpoint also they seem to us extremely doubtful. To rush into marriage without prospect of sufficient maintenance is not trusting God but tempting Him. Such marriages are extremely immoral actions, and they deserve legal punishment on account of their danger to the community.' 'Greater evil to the world can scarcely be caused in any way than by such marriages. Even in the most favourable cases such early marriages must have a deteriorating influence on the physical and intellectual culture of posterity.' At p. 207, Jolles quotes a passage from Pufendorff which is in judicious contrast to Luther's opinion: 'Matrimonii autem contrahendi occasio non ex sola aetate aut generandi aptitudine intelligitur; sed ut copia quoque sit decentis conditionis, nec non facultas alendi uxorem et prolem nascituram, ac ut mas quoque sit idoneus ad gerendum partes patris familias.' "Igitur non modo non est necessarium, sed stultum insuper iuvenes animum ad uxores adplicare, qui sibi suisque nihil nisi strenuam esuritionem possint polliceri, ac civitatem mendicabulis sint impleturi, aut qui ipsi supra pueros parum sapiant.' 'Quite consistently also Pufendorff is not altogether strongly antagonistic to celibacy.'

and oppression,' he added, 'is on account of our sins, and we can see plainly how the people in the towns and in the country are becoming corrupted, and how all classes are changing.' Chief among these sins, and the foremost cause of impoverishment, was the 'inordinate eating and drinking that went on, the misuse of God's gifts, which gave rise to high prices and dearth of all commodities'; and the second cause was, 'the great extravagance in costly clothes.' But people are as if they were blind, so that they cannot see the injury and ruin they are causing, and they will not allow any one to tell them of it.' [1]

The preacher Rorarius also gave as a reason for the general poverty the fact that 'nobody is content with his own position; everybody wants to soar higher than he can afford: the peasant apes the burgher, the burgher the nobleman in this vicious feasting, banqueting and display.' 'Eating has grown to gorging, drinking to carousing.' 'People will not work, but only lounge about idly.' Hence the lack of thrashers, ploughmen, day-labourers, men-servants and maid-servants, willing to serve an employer for suitable wages. 'They would rather beg than earn their bread honourably, and so the country is overflowing with mendicants.' [2]

[1] Löhneiss, 304–305. Cf. his words quoted above at p. 121.

[2] *Fünfundzwanzig Predigten*, 54ᵇ, 72ᵇ–73, 75ᵇ, 79ᵇ. ** The realisation that the people were everywhere sinking more and more into poverty stirred the Nüremberg patrician Berthold Holzschuher to draw up a scheme of socio-political reform, which at the end of March 1565 he submitted to the town council of Hamburg and, as it appears, to other towns and princes also. As causes of this poverty Holzschuher begins by mentioning hasty, ill-considered marriages: 'the common people marry quite thoughtlessly, and marry into poverty, which becomes all the more serious when God gives to such poverty numerous children who, with their parents,

The generally prevailing idleness of the people was designated as one of the most cancerous evils of the day.

In 1542 the committee of the Provincial Estates in the Duchy of Saxony said there was a dearth of servants everywhere, because everybody preferred begging to working.[1]

'Numbers of idle men and women,' says a police ordinance of 1550, 'live upon alms and will not work; although they are quite able to earn their living, they prefer idleness and begging, and this makes it difficult to get day-labourers and servants. An electoral decree against beggars (1588) said: Young, healthy, strong

soon take to the begging trade.' The next reason he gives is extravagance, especially among the young, in dress and banqueting, in every kind of vanity and ostentation, the one vying with the other, and all trying to outdo each other in pomp and splendour in spite of the smallness of their means. 'Hence it follows that the children grow up in the midst of debt and come to poverty, and when they marry they have nothing to live on, and if God gives them children they have a hard matter to feed these little ones and bring them up according to their ideas of grandeur, and the children are brought to the same misery as their parents were in, and owing to this poverty they fall into evil ways, immorality and all sorts of wantonness,' and so on. For the prevention of such conditions Holzschuher deemed it necessary that human beings should have a helping hand held out to them as soon as they came into the world. This must be managed by means of a compulsory regulation for insuring a marriage portion, whereby for every new-born infant, at least one thaler shall be paid to the State when the birth is registered. When the child grows to manhood and marries, on presentation of the government bond received for his or her deposit, a sum equal to three times the deposit, is to be paid out as marriage portion. Should the parents be too poor and the godfather unwilling to make the deposit, then the State can remit it, and the young people about to marry may none the less claim a marriage gift equal to three times the missing deposit. Holzschuher calls this remission a work of mercy—whence appears the socialistic bent of his mind. Cf. K. Frankenstein, 'B. Holzschuher, ein Sozialpolitiker des sechzehnten Jahrhunderts,' in supp. to the *Allg. Zeitung*, 1891, n. 197, and Ehrenberg in *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Staatswissenschaft*, xlvi. (1890), 717–735.

[1] Falke, *Steuerbewilligungen*, xxx. 433.

men and women give themselves up to begging and teach their children the same trade, so that in all towns and villages the inhabitants are pestered and annoyed by these vagrants in all the streets, lanes and roads . . . fatherless and motherless children roam about in the towns and in the country begging like the adults.' [1]

'There is a dearth of working people,' said the Landgrave Louis of Hesse, in 1571, 'because most of the people, as experience shows, are given up to idleness; many who are quite able to earn their bread, instead of working, go about begging with their children.' The Landgrave Maurice of Hesse complained even more strongly, in 1601, of the 'idleness and begging that was gaining ground everywhere, in consequence of which workmen were difficult to get.' [2]

Conditions of this sort prevailed almost everywhere.[3]

'The whole world,' said Luther in the gospel sermons of the Church postilles, 'is full of useless, cheating, wicked scoundrels, day-labourers, lazy artisans, farm-servants, maid-servants, and the idle, vagabond beggar-folk who prowl about everywhere unpunished with their tricks and their impudence, cheating, humbugging, and stealing and defrauding the genuine poor of their rightful dues.' [4] As a warning against all this sort of riffraff, by whom 'he himself had been humbugged this very year more than he liked to say,' Luther prepared and prefaced, in the years 1528 and 1529, new editions

[1] Landau, *Materielle Zustände*, 344. *Codex Augusteus*, i. 1398, 1403 ff., 1429 ff.

[2] Landau, 345 ff.

[3] ** On the Rhine the pest of vagrancy was at its worst in the middle of the sixteenth century. Cf. Quetsch, 265 note.

[4] Collected Works, xiv. 391.

of the 'Liber vagatorum'[1] under the title 'Von der falschen Bettler Büberei.' He insisted emphatically that, 'Every town and village ought to be acquainted with its own poor, as put down in the register, so that they might know how to help them, but that alien and foreign beggars were not to be tolerated unless they could produce credentials. For there is far too much villainy carried on amongst them as this little book will show. And if every town were to take cognisance of its own poor such villainy would soon be put a stop to.'[2] Nevertheless so little was this villainy stopped that in 1560 Cyriacus Spangenberg published a fresh edition of the 'Booklet,' because, said he, 'share begging and trickery has so gained the upper hand that scarcely anybody is safe from imposture. Those therefore who wished to be forewarned should read this book carefully; those who will not be advised cannot be helped.'[3] Twenty years later the Superintendent Nicholas Selnekker complained that the land was full of beggars 'who practised all sorts of evil and rascality, thieving, murder, magic and so forth.' The magistrates he said ought to keep a watchful eye on them; but who could possibly get rid of them all.'[4] In order, however, to help as much as possible he had the 'Büchlein von den Bettlern,' with Luther's preface published anew at Leipzig, and said in his own preface that 'there were plenty of funds for churches, schools, hospitals and the maintenance of the poor, if only the devil incarnate did not blind our eyes and take such strong possession of our avaricious hearts, that we sought to make our own profit and riches out of the

[1] See above p. 428.
[2] Collected Works, lxiii. 269–271.
[3] Avê-Lallemant, i. 152, 154–155.
[4] Selnekker, *Drei Predigten*, Bl. H.

alms boxes. 'There are too many land loafers and itinerant scholars going about with rank imposture and trickery, people who ought not to be tolerated in a well-regulated community. They like to live and enjoy themselves on other people's toil, to beg and idle about; they work at nothing regularly, and only annoy and injure other people.' 'It is also very harmful and wrong that some of those who ought to forbid and stop these practices, themselves take bribes from Jews, gipsies, jugglers, treacle-water vendors and other lewd fellows—beakers, money, and money's worth—and leave them free to carry on their "Truphas" as they call it, their villainy, imposture, lying and cheating without shame in Christian places, in towns and villages, and justify their proceedings on the score of privileges, passes and old traditional usage. Fie, for shame, that they should ever dare mention such things! There cannot be a spark of Christian feeling in these people who are ready to harbour Turks, Jews, Muscovites, the worst of villains, yea the very devil himself, if only they will give them money.'[1]

A full description of the entire system of mendicancy was given by Ambrosius Pape, Pastor at Klein-Ammensleben, in his 'Bettel- und Garte- Teufel of 1586.'[2] This nuisance, he wrote, became more and more terrible and unbearable because no one had the courage to oppose it resolutely, and because the magistrates were negligent in inflicting punishment and took no pains to put down the offenders. 'Where any and every scoundrel is free to carry on his iniquity, things get

[1] Selnekker, Preface, Bl. N 3–4.

[2] Magdeburg, 1586–1587; cf. Goedeke, *Grundriss*, ii. 482 (** See also Osborn, *Teufelsliteratur*, 159 ff.), printed in the *Theatrum Diabolorum*, ii. 158[b]–192.

worse and worse and the godless riffraff increases from day to day, as has happened here and always does happen. Whereas no steps were taken to check this evil at its beginning, and it has spread like a cancer and almost covered the whole land and choked all the good seed, the matter must now be taken up in good earnest and no trouble spared to help in its suppression.' It was for this reason that he had written his book as a 'faithful and bold attempt' by which he might perhaps succeed in raising up a deliverer for the nation oppressed by this countless horde of beggars, &c., &c.[1]

Like all his contemporaries Pape, too, gave as reasons for the ever-increasing plague of beggars, the general distaste for work 'nobody any longer caring to live by toil, but all wishing to have good times, and further the prevalence of drunkenness, the way in which fathers of households neglected their homes, and the depravity of the populace, whose lewdness, insolence, dishonesty and rascality were so great in towns and villages that it was impossible to write enough about it all. Many kingdoms had been impoverished and reduced to beggary through the special visitation of God on account of their oppression of the poor and the robbery of ecclesiastical goods—churches, schools, hospitals and poor houses, which was carried on by high and low.[2]

First among the beggars who infest the country Pape puts the able-bodied tramps and odd-jobbers, 'the terror and torture of the whole land.' Next come the idle young fellows who loathe work and, in company of lewd women and rogues, rob, steal and murder wherever there is a chance. Akin to these are the wandering musicians who ask for no alms, but sell their songs

[1] Fol. 159 ff., 181[b].

[2] Fol. 163[b] ff.

and tunes and waste the proceeds in rioting; they are mixed with every mischief going on. Then we have queer treshers, ditchers and such who can find no work to do, no master to serve. Also clerks and all sorts of artisans who tell you how they have travelled through many lands, and lost all they possessed through sickness, or robbers. Further, vagrant scholars, by word or writing, apply for a viaticum, a trifle to help them on the road; preachers 'and other common folk' pretend to have suffered persecution and exile for the true religion whereas in truth they have been removed for their evil deeds; numerous old and worn-out people, past work, drag their wretchedness from village to village and are present at every feast. Among these beggars there are many downright scoundrels ever up to mischief. Young women are often in their company. They like to travel together, but when they approach a township they separate in order to multiply their begging power. All these are 'the honest poor.' Besides them there are the impostors who 'have a house full of children with nothing to eat'; pretended orphans 'with no home and no one to look after them;' the maimed, the lame, the blind and sufferers from the most loathsome and most painful diseases who encumber churches, squares and roads, preying alike on public and private charity. Many have learned some dodge to simulate illness: that dodge is to them more familiar than the Paternoster and more pleasing than a new coat.'

Pape then recounts all the unfortunate experiences he himself had had with beggars, especially in the open country, where he scarcely felt sure of life and property owing to the swarms of strong-bodied mendicants.

In short 'the villainy of all the many different kinds

of beggars was greater than anything ever known on earth before.' [1]

In the large towns also where most energetic efforts had been made to do away with the nuisance, mendicancy had increased in an appalling manner. In Lübeck, for instance, in 1531, the council had prohibited begging of every description, but already in 1553 it was necessary to issue a decree to the effect that the mendicancy officer was to go on Sunday morning with the bailiffs to all the churches and drive the beggars into the service, and also forbid them to expose their wounds shamelessly to view.[2] In Hamburg the council complained in 1604 that begging had so gained the upper hand in the town that the burghers and other inhabitants were not only pestered and annoyed by it from morning to night and also all through the night, but that no respectable man who had anything to say to someone else in the house or out of it, could get through his talk without being interrupted by a beggar.' [3] When Nicholas Selnekker in 1580 published anew, at Leipzig, his 'Büchlein von den Bettlern,' he said in the preface: 'Here; with us, Nuremberg has the repute of not allowing any land loafers, beggars, gipsies, Jews, jugglers, quack doctors and such like impostors to come to the public fairs and markets in the town or district.' [4] In Nuremberg itself, however, one heard a different tale. In spite of all the ordinances frequently used against the 'hanging about and begging of natives and foreigners' in the streets and in front of houses, daily experience,' said the town council on July 28, 1588, 'shows that hitherto such orders have met with scant obedience.'

[1] Fol. 166 ff.
[2] Avé-Lallemant, i. 42 note.
[3] Staphorst, Part I. of Vol. iv. 636. Kiehn, i. 260; cf. 363.
[4] Selnekker, Preface, n. 3.

'The burghers here are still beyond measure annoyed and tormented with vagrants, beggars and riotous persons and with the howling and screaming of little boys and girls, which goes on day and night in the streets and in front of the houses, especially in wintertime.' It was therefore necessary, the council said, to issue still sterner enactments and to multiply the number of mendicant officers, and of protective measures. In addition to penal enactments against the mendicants themselves, the inhabitants of the town were forbidden on pain of severe punishment to hinder the mendicancy officers in the fulfilment of their duty, 'to abuse them, assault them, or in any way check them by words or deeds.' Housing, harbouring and smuggling in useless, mischievous beggars, rioters, vagrants, and other disreputable riffraff was again prohibited on pain of heavy fines.[1]

The proceedings of the beggars and gipsies in Upper Suabia, Alsatia and North Switzerland were vividly depicted by Nicodemus Frischlin in a comedy of the year 1597; other poets too described the pleasures of beggar life.[2] 'The beggars and vagrants of all sorts' wrote Aegidius Albertinus in 1612, 'prefer loafing about in idleness to working and earning their bread honourably': 'they get on so remarkably well in this way that they call begging the golden trade, and they pursue it in a masterly manner for they tramp and stroll and loaf through all lands, up and down, hither and thither, attend all the yearly markets and church fairs, and haunt the courts of all the princes and lords, and all

[1] Waldau, *Vermischte Beiträge*, iv. 498–505.

[2] See our statements, vol. xii. 159 ff. ** Concerning mendicancy in Bern, especially at the beginning of the sixteenth century, see Geiser, *Gesch. des Armenwesens im Kanton Bern* (Bern, 1894).

the abbeys and cloisters.'[1] We quote the following lines from a poem on the beggars at the Frankfort Fair :

Always the first these folk arrive,
Old ones, young ones, big ones, small ones,
Hither they walk, or ride, or drive,
Lots of children hanging round them.
From twenty, thirty miles, I ween
These beggars coming here I 've seen.
If any of them should not come,
It 's thought there 's something wrong at home,
' Either they are ruined quite,
Or else somebody has died.'
Many thousands they all number,
The best quarters they encumber,
In the most distinguished streets
All these vagabonds one meets.
They call this their electoral town,
Here sits their council, here they crown
Their monarchs, and here too in state
Weddings galore they celebrate.
One who weds outside the clan
Becomes a scorned, despised man.
Wide extended is this race,
Gamblers in it have a place,
Wandering scholars, and . . .
Pedlars, hawkers . . .[2]

What an amount of poverty there was and what enormous crowds of wandering beggars is shown by quantities of reports of undoubted veracity. In 1529, for instance, at the time of the great dearness, there appeared in Strasburg 1600 alien poor who were lodged and fed in one of the suppressed convents until the following spring ; in 1530, 23,545 aliens passing through the town were received into the refuge for the destitute. In 1566 on a certain day about midsummer, 900 strangers driven there by hunger, were counted. The council let them stay one night in the refuge for the destitute,

[1] *Der Welt Tummel- und Schauplatz* (1612), p. 384 ff.

[2] M. Mangold, Marckschiff, in *Mitteilungen des Frankfurter Altertumsvereins*, vi. 347.

gave them food and drink, and the next day they were marshalled out of the city gate, and the whole enormous gang trudged off to go and beg elsewhere. From St. John's day, 1585–1586 the number of vagrants received into the said refuge was 41,058, in the following year there were, actually 58,561; as to indigenous paupers, the council during these last two years, out of a population of 30,000, reported no less than 142,203 cases of recipients of charity.[1] At Basle there were sometimes in one year 40,000 aliens to be dealt with.[2] Similarly in Würtemberg, 'there was an overwhelming concourse not only of poor women and children from neighbouring towns and hamlets, but also of indigenous and alien disbanded soliders, land loafers, students, musicians, writers, schoolmasters, lackeys and so forth.'[3]

For countless numbers of people without homes, without fixed callings and dwelling-places, begging became a regular profession; vagabondism, gaining continually in strength, was one of the plainest tokens of the weakness and disintegration of national and social life, of the corruption not only of socio-political but also of religious conditions. 'Whereas,' said a preacher in 1571, 'the highest authority in the Empire, and the provincial and municipal authorities have lost nearly all

[1] Mone, *Zeitschr. für die Gesch. des Oberrheins*, i. 151, 152, 155. Röhrich, *Gesch. der Reformation in Elsass*, i. 268 ff. *Jahrbücher für Nationalökonomie und Statistik*, new series, viii. 416. In Offenburg also there were 'shoals of poor people who were a great annoyance to the burghers every Sunday.' Even to the outlying town of Wolfach wandering beggars of the highest and lowest classes came in crowds—nobles, clergy, schoolmasters, students, burghers and peasants, sick, wounded and otherwise infirm. *Zeitschr. für die Gesch. des Oberrheins*, xix. 161–163. At Wolfach, for instance, in 1600 there were among the recipients of charity four poor itinerant schoolmasters, in 1604, 'one schoolmaster from Chur, with his wife and children; one poor schoolmaster from Muntzingen.'

[2] Ochs, vi. 305.

[3] Reyscher, xii. 616; cf. 635–636.

their power, and princes and people, from top to bottom, are ruined, all the many mandates and penal edicts against beggars, vagrants, land loafers, disbanded soldiers, gipsies, swindlers of every description, thieves, robbers, murderers, are of no avail, as we can see for ourselves every day.' [1]

Criminal riffraff of every kind and description, downright swindlers who systematically carried on fraud, pilfering, robbery and murder, were the outcome of the system of beggary and vagabondage, and increased in equal proportions.

Contemporary reports on the proceedings of these people border on the incredible.

'The lying and cheating of which all these many kinds of beggars are guilty might be bearable if it stopped there,' said Ambrosius Pape in his 'Bettel- und Garte-Teufel,' 'but it does not stop there: they rob and strangle people and beat them in such an abominable way, that one scarcely can go out of one's house in safety, or sleep therein in quiet ease. If a wedding takes place in any village they come in swarms, so that there are often more of them than of invited guests, and one wonders whence all this rabble has sprung, and who brought them the news that here or there something was going on. Young and old, women and children, they fill nearly the whole court-yard, and seating themselves in row after row take possession of four or five tables, and almost as much food is carried round to them as to the guests who were bidden. Hence the prospect of a wedding in a village is enough to give one "the blues." I have often said that if I were to court ten times, even the

[1] *Predig über Hunger- und Sterbejahre*, Bl. 3.

very richest of brides, and to have wedding festivities in a village, I should verily hesitate, for the villainy that goes on is too atrocious and there is no fear whatever among these scoundrels. In wintertime they force their way into private rooms, and sit down at the table or round the stove, so that one can neither go in nor out.' 'After cunningly watching their opportunities in houses they come at night, break in, steal and carry off what they like, and if they have a grudge against the householder, and are bloodthirstily inclined, or perhaps afraid they will not be able to complete their robbery should the household awaken, they will murder all whom they come across, as is known from experience, witness the case of the pastor at Ebendorf.' Pape describes many frightful murders which took place in his immediate neighbourhood, all within fourteen days: 'so horrible that to hear about them might well make one's hair stand on end and one's skin creep.' [1]

Corresponding descriptions from all parts of Germany show that the whole country, especially since the second half of the sixteenth century, was a prey to the scourge of swindling beggars, with their brutal, inhuman robberies, murders, incendiarism and so forth. 'Would that God,' wrote Hans Sachs in 1559, 'might send us a German Hercules to rid our land of robbery, murder and torments; for nobody is safe any longer.' [2]

In the same year the Franconian Imperial Estates

[1] Bl. 172, 180b, 184 ff. See above p. 506.

[2] *Hans Sachs*, published by Keller, viii. 508. When Lucas Rem of Augsburg went with his wife from Wildbad to Ulm in 1535, being in great fear of highway robberies, he took with him a large escort of horsemen and footmen; the journey lasted from the 12th to the 16th of September. Greiff, *Rems Tagebuch*, 28.

joined together in a league simply and solely 'on account of the injurious and dangerous plunderings, swindlings, robberies, murders, &c., which were of such frequent occurrence in the Holy Empire. They had, however, as little success with their league as the separate Estates had with numerous ordinances against all the mendicant crew. Nor could there be any result, since almost the only means resorted to was banishment, and so one magistrate drove the riffraff to another magistrate, and it was kept in a continued state of circulation and driven to the perpetration of the most manifold crimes and iniquities.'[1]

'The worst of all these depredators were the discharged Landsknechts, *gartende*, i.e., roving soldiers, who went about in large gangs, quartered themselves on the peasants and even in the markets and small open towns, and committed the foulest excesses. In their train followed often all sorts of vagrant riffraff, beggars, male and female, gipsies, jugglers and the like.' They were not satisfied with plunder, robbery and murder, but they also set fire to the ripe cornfields.[2]

[1] Landau, *Materielle Zustände*, 338 ff.

[2] The historian Aventin said with truth that the chief cause of all this evil was that no one looked after the discharged soldiers. 'It is a great curse from God,' he wrote in 1529, 'that those who have to risk life and body for the public good, for land and people, are obliged to go about begging, have no assured income, no liberty like other citizens who sit at home eating and drinking to excess, skinning and scraping the poor. When soldiers are wanted anyone is accepted regardless of character, and golden mountains are held out before him; when they are no longer wanted they are treated like useless dogs, like murderers and thieves. It is a great shame on us Germans that men who risk their lives for King and country receive no pay, and a greater shame it is that we rid the land of them by hanging and disgrace. Their choice lies between thieving and begging.'—Aventin, i. 216, 247-248. ** Concerning soldier life in the sixteenth century, see G. Liebe, *Der Soldat in der deutschen Vergangenheit* (Steinhausen, *Monographie zur deutschen Kulturgeschichte*, i.), Leipzig, 1899.

In Bavaria, for instance, these disbanded soldiers formed raiding bands,[1] against whom the communities and the provincial tribunals were in a state of perpetual warfare. In 1565 they burned down four large villages in the district of Pfaffenhofen and Schrobenhausen.[2] 'The accursed race' became so strong that Duke Albrecht V. was repeatedly obliged to order a general crusade of the whole country against the malefactors. 'On the fifteenth day of every month,' said a ducal edict of May 1, 1568, all 'guardians, judges and police officials shall meet, and scour the country.' All who were caught, it was said in later edicts, were to be sent to the galleys or hanged with a rope. A ducal order of June 1579 strongly reprimanded the punishable remissness of the princely chief officials who, 'regardless of the multitude of mandates issued, allowed all the disbanded soldiers, roysterers, beggars and land loafers to pursue unchecked their plunder and oppression of the poor subjects.'[3] When in 1593 the Provincial Estates described the distressed condition of the peasant class, Duke Maximilian I. answered: 'All that could be done for the peasants was to be done, but above all, means must be devised for ridding them of this plague of disbanded Landsknechts, beggars, &c.'[4] Five years later, however, as the Duke complained, it was still notorious what the poor peasants, especially in the hamlets and the waste lands, suffered through night surprises and plunderings, and how they were in danger of life and body from the criminal hordes of '*gartende knechten*,' roysterers, beggars, gipsies and so forth, a scourge which proceeded chiefly from the neglect and

[1] See Schmeller, ii. 1179. [2] Westenrieder, *Beiträge*, viii. 296.
[3] Westenrieder, viii. 298 ff. [4] Wolf, *Gesch. Maximilians*, i. 114–115.

remissness of many of the ruling authorities and their officials.[1]

The same objectionable state of things prevailed in Baden. In 1576 the Margrave Philip II. warned his subjects against the 'incendiaries' who had again banded together in the country. The following year three fresh edicts were issued against a dangerous 'gang of incendiaries who were to be known by red buttons on their hats.' In the years 1581 and 1582 things had come to such a pass 'owing to several bands of robbers, murderers and incendiaries who were secretly aided and abetted that scarcely anybody was safe in his own house.' 'It also happens daily,' said the Margrave in 1582, 'that men, forgetful of all honour, run away and leave their wives and children behind them; for their punishment their wives and children shall straightway be sent after them.'[2]

Added to all the other varieties of thieving, murdering riffraff, in Baden, as elsewhere, the gipsies were a fruitful source of terror to the peasants. According to a report of 1591 it was 'not an unfrequent occurrence for gangs of these people, mounted or on foot, to fall on villages, and by plunder or fire do them great damage, or else to attack the peasants in the open fields, throw them violently down and rob them.'[3]

What were the conditions in Würtemberg as regards public safety is seen from an ordinance of Duke Christopher of 1556, which says: 'Day by day we find the

[1] *Erneuerte Mandata und Landtgebott Herzog Maximilians I. vom 13 Marz 1598*, fol. xxvii.

[2] See the evidence for this of 1570–1584, in Roth v. Schreckenstein in the *Zeitschr. für die Gesch. des Oberrheins*, xxx. 132, 149, 155–156, 402–412.

[3] J. Bader, *Gesch. der Stadt Freiburg*, ii. 88.

incendiary scoundrels going on with their murderous work; not only are houses and barns burnt down here and there, but whole hamlets, villages and castles are devoured by fire, and that so quickly and unexpectedly that the old people often cannot escape and are cruelly burnt to death with the young children.'[1]

In Hesse in 1590 it was complained that 'all sorts of alien beggars, foreign and other unemployed riff-raff pour into the town, amongst them also freebooters from the Netherlands. These people commit arson, lie in wait for travellers, assault and rob pedestrians in the roads, often even in the neighbourhood of populous towns.' In 1600 an edict was issued by the Count of Schaumburg against roving *Gardenknechts*, land loafers, foreign beggars, planet readers and other impostors, who greatly oppressed the people in many ways, but especially at weddings and christenings, where they frequently gathered and compelled people to give them charity. Even at funerals the vagabonds actually clamoured for alms. The house of mourning would be beset by a crowd of beggars and children, all asking alms of the mourners, and if their requests were not favourably received, they would proceed to threats and defiance. They came in shoals into towns and villages, forced themselves into houses under the semblance of beggars, made the streets unsafe, practised robbery, murder and incendiarism. In a written document of the Elector of Mayence they were described as 'indigenous and Italian beggars,' in a Nassau ordinance as 'unemployed and *gardendeknechte*, as pedlars, gipsies, incendiaries, lewd rabble and so forth.' 'These tramps and *gardirer*,' says

[1] Reyscher, xii. 295.

another public document, 'go about chiefly with falsely trumped-up tales of damage they have suffered through fire or floods, or some other disaster that has befallen them, such as imprisonment, unjust banishment, discharge from service, religious persecution and what not; close investigation, however, has always shown that such tales are rank imposture.' [1]

In Saxony, even under the rule of the Elector Augustus, 'one of the sternest princes in the Holy Empire,' highway robberies and incendiarism increased continually notwithstanding that sharper and sharper penal edicts constantly went forth. Ordinances of this sort were issued in the years 1555, 1559, 1561, 1566, 1567, 1569, 1570, 1571, 1577, 1579, 1581, 1583, and they spoke of 'men and women being knocked down, robbed and murdered'; they said that 'the fires and devastation caused by these scoundrels were becoming so frequent that irreparable damage was being done,' that 'on account of the disbanded Landsknechts and other disreputable thieves, people had to protect their houses against robbery on Sundays and feast-days'; that 'these unemployed loafers often go about in gangs of twenty and thirty and take people's possessions from them by force'; 'when fires and robberies occur,' it was said, 'the alarm bell ought to sound and call out all the men in towns and villages to help and defence, and pursuit of the criminals.' Again, 'under the name of gipsies a lewd, desperate mob, composed of Germans and people of other nationalities, perambulate the country, settle themselves among the subjects, rob and pilfer and commit all sorts of abominable sacrilege, sorcery and immorality; things are

[1] Landau, *Materielle Zustände*, 339-340.

growing worse and worse.'[1] Under the administrator Frederick William of Weimar (Maximilian was a minor) and the Electors Christian I. and Christian II., and John George, almost every year produced similar descriptions and equally stringent, but also equally futile, penal decrees. For instance, under Christian I. in the years 1588 and 1590 it was said: 'Foreign land loafers and market beggars besiege the streets; gipsies armed with muskets, commit street robberies and do violence to the poor people in the country.'[2] Near Leipzig the beggar mobs fought regular pitched battles in the open field. In 1616, says a report, 'through the crime of incendiarism numbers of towns, hamlets and villages were almost entirely ruined.'[3]

'In the Harz in 1586 incendiarism raged to such a frightful extent that nobody felt safe in the land, ruins and débris were everywhere to be seen; and in numbers of villages no corn could be had.' In July 1590, all the forests in the countries of Wernigerode, Regenstein, and Hohenstein, and in the territory of the Bishop of Halberstadt were on fire for several weeks. The towns of Heringen and Suhl were completely rased to the ground by incendiarism.[4] The town of Tangermünde was set on fire in September 1617 by six incendiaries: '486 houses with 53 barns filled with corn were reduced to ashes.'[5]

For the Oberlausitz in 1590 the order was issued that 'the *gartknechte*, thieves and beggars who collected in mobs, were to be followed from town to town, from

[1] *Codex Augusteus*, i. 54, 155, 158, 690, 1403–1415.

[2] For the numerous mandates see *Codex Augusteus*, i. 1431–1438, 1439–1440, 1443–1446, 1449–1452, 1485–1488.

[3] Tholuck, *Das kirchliche Leben*, 220. Heydenreich, 275.

[4] *Winnigstädts Chron. Halb.* in Abel, 422. [5] Pohlmann, 301–302.

village to village, from hamlet to hamlet; in their pursuit the towns were to help the country and the country the towns, to the best of their abilities.' But 'in spite of all mandates,' said the Emperor Rudolf in 1605, 'murder, adultery, bloodshed, turbulence, violence, in short, crimes of all sorts, increase more and more among the unmannerly nobles and other lewd people in the country and in the towns, and the authorities do not do their duty in the matter of prompt pursuit and punishment of offending persons, but either help them to escape or else overlook their misdemeanours.'[1]

The same condition prevailed in Mecklenburg. In 1540, according to Sastrowe, 'street-robbery had become quite common in Mecklenburg because it was not severely punished, and distinguished members of the nobility were among the miscreants.'[2] In 1563 it was represented to the Dukes John Albert and Ulrich that 'assaults and street-robberies were gaining great head in the principality, and the robbers were not severely punished.'[3] On the complaints of the knights concerning the *gartendeknechte,* the vagrants and beggars, it was recognised by the 'fatherly' government that these scoundrelly people were especially burdensome to the peasants, and therefore 'the poor peasants' must bear the costs of getting rid of them; 'every farm was to contribute towards providing carts and horses by means of which this riffraff might be sent out of the country; for it was certain that the poor peasants were more drained by these vagabond

[1] *Codex Augusteus,* ii. Part iii. 117–120, 133–136.

[2] Sastrowe, i. 196.

[3] Franck, *Altes und neues Mecklenburg,* Buch iii. 116–117.

loafers and beggars than by the Turkish taxes, that these beggars cost the peasants more in one day than one cart and horses in the year.'[1] Incendiarism, too, raged in the land. A ducal circular dispatch of 1577 made all the different magistracies acquainted with the signs of the incendiaries and thieves who were specially sent 'by foreign potentates and secret enemies in order to lay towns and villages waste by fire'; the signs are all the same as those used by such people in other German lands in the middle of the sixteenth century, in Saxony, Thuringia, Brandenburg, Pomerania—tokens in the form of a bag-pipe, a springing lion, a St. Andrew's cross, an arrow-point with a ring, and so forth.[2]

In Pomerania-Stettin the Dukes Barnim and Philip announced in 1549 that they had come to an understanding with the Elector of Brandenburg and the Dukes of Mecklenburg concerning measures for the seizure and punishment of the hordes of street-robbers, incendiaries, fighters, and terrorisers, who multiplied daily.'[3] In a ducal injunction of 1560 it said: 'There are numbers of insubordinate, insolent people who, in defiance of the peace declared by the Holy Empire, and of our frequently issued earnest mandates, for very slight reasons, often without any given reason, send out challenges to their antagonists, and not only revenge themselves on the latter but also do great injury by fire, murder, cattle and horse-stealing to whole towns, villages

[1] Franck, Buch xii. 64, of the year 1607; cf. 93–94 of the year 1609.

[2] Lisch, *Jahrbücher*, 26: *Quartal- und Schlussbericht*, 19. Concerning the 'Gartendeknechte' and other land loafers in Mecklenburg see Franck, Buch xii. 64, 93–94.

[3] Dähnert, iii. 410, 412–413. Cf. also Spahn, *Verfassungs- und Wirtschaftsgesch. des Herzogtums Pommern*, p. 125 ff.

and hamlets. Many of them put forward as excuse for this behaviour, verbal or actual insults or injuries sustained by them ten, twenty or thirty years ago, and long ago nullified by years; or else they rake up the discipline and punishments inflicted on them by their masters in their years of apprenticeship or service; they band together with other low riffraff and appear in swarms in the open fields armed with all sorts of weapons, and they proceed to burn, rob and murder in the parishes in which their enemies are settled: against all such criminals the authorities shall proceed with corporal punishment and execution by the sword; in the most serious cases the miscreants shall be put to death by fire.[1]

In 1569 a Provincial Diet Recess threw the whole land into consternation by 'a credible report coming from other lands and princely courts that no less than 500 incendiaries had been sent to Germany and had already set fire to towns, villages and hamlets.'[2]

By a ducal ordinance of 1569 it was decreed, as it had been decreed in Saxony, that when the number of these miscreants was so great that the inhabitants of a village could not protect themselves against them, the alarm bell was to be rung, and the peasants of the neighbouring villages were to hasten to the rescue.[3]

Reports from Brandenburg were equally doleful. Already in 1542 the Provincial Estates had complained of 'the numbers of foreign beggars who gave themselves up to incendiarism.[4] At a Provincial Diet of 1549 it was said that 'in consequence of the buying out of the

[1] Dähnert, iii. 414–415.
[2] *Ibid.* i. 533.
[3] *Ibid.* iii. 418–419, 420, 604–605, 621, 821, 842–843.
[4] Winter, *Märkische Stände*, xix. 592.

peasants by the nobles the country proletariat was growing and burdening the towns; street-robbers and violent assaults were causing great insecurity everywhere.[1] The same measures for security were applied as in Saxony and Pomerania, but 'no help or improvement resulted from them.' By a command of the Elector Joachim II. in 1565 it was decreed that 'In order to put down the numerous disturbers of public peace the nobles were to be on the alert with the peasants and take them prisoners; and if they were not a strong enough force, they were to sound the alarm bell and summon the neighbours to help in arresting the malefactors,'[2] but so little were the latter intimidated by this enactment that they still persisted in collecting in the public streets and roadways, in hamlets and villages, 'armed with muskets galore,' so that the Elector John George in 1572 thought necessary to issue 'an improvement' on the earlier ordinances. Whenever robberies and murders occurred in a village, he decreed that all the neighbouring villages, man for man, were to hasten up with the best weapons they could muster and pursue the murderers and robbers; they were to track them also in the territories of neighbouring princes with whom the territorial prince of the molested district had an understanding on the matter.[3] Nevertheless, as a fresh electoral edict of 1584 was forced to recognise, all kinds of land-plagues, Landsknechts, pond-diggers, beggars and idlers became more and more numerous and daring, the chief reason of which, said John George, was that these people were encouraged by

[1] Winter, *Märkische Stände*, xx. 515. Edict of the Elector Joachim II. of 1550 in Mylius, vi. Part 1, 82–83.

[2] Mylius, v. Part 5, 2.

[3] *Ibid.* v. Abt. V. 5–6.

the residents in the country, who housed and harboured them and bought the stolen goods which they carried round for sale.[1] The opinion that 'desperate robbing, burning and murder had now reached such a height that they could not grow worse, was proved wrong by later decrees of the years 1590, 1595, 1596, 1599, 1603, 1606, 1612, 1615, 1616, for each one of these spoke of continually increasing evil conditions. 'Burning, begging and brigandage are gaining head more and more; the miscreants become more and more irrepressible,' said an edict of 1596; and three years later, 'We hear daily complaints of the increasing iniquities of the vagabond class.' 'The system of private warfare,' said the Elector Joachim Frederick in 1603, despite all the corporal and capital punishment that has been enforced, is becoming so common in almost all parts of our principality, that even unknown foreigners, without any given or known reason, scapegrace godless villains belonging to the land, who have not been allowed to carry out to the full their iniquitous wills and dealings, have the audacity to send letters of challenge and other tokens of hostility to whole towns, hamlets, communities, villages, thereby bringing the utmost misery and ruin on scores of innocent people. These people must be proceeded against with fire and sword.' Nevertheless after the lapse of three years came the statement: 'In spite of all earlier enactments, private warfare, incendiarism, robbing and plundering by *gartendeknechte* and beggars is going on unchecked all over the land; for this reason every individual who aids and abets the criminals, or who does not, when he can, give information concerning them to the magistrates, must be punished like them

[1] Mylius, v. Abt. V. 15; cf. 28.

with fire and sword.' What was the result of this decision is seen from a decree of the Elector John Sigismund in 1615: 'Never before have the numbers of the criminal class been so great as now; there are as many as sixty of them to one gang, and they join together in quantities and have never perpetrated more crime than nowadays. They blackmail the people at their will, break open house doors, carry off whatever suits them, seize pedestrians in the roads, rob and even kill them, and are also guilty of a great deal of iniquity and murdering in the towns.' Towards the end of the following years matters were still no better. 'The evil-doers and vagabond crew scoured the land in strong bands "wearing armour," attacked the poor peasants, often even in districts immediately subject to the Elector, cut their arms or other limbs in two, robbed their houses, taking what they liked and damaging the rest, in short gave unbounded vent to their savage brutality and behaved in a manner never before experienced even from enemies.' [1]

[1] 'Die Kurfürstlichen Mandate aus den Jahren 1590–1616,' in Mylius, v. Abt. V. 19–35; VI. Abt. I. 187–189, 271–276, and iii. Abt. I. 5–6. ** Liebe, 'Zur Vorgeschichte des Landstreicherwesens,' says (*Zeitschr. für deutsche Kulturgesch*, Jahrg. 1900, p. 302 f.) that criminal vagabondage assumed a threatening character before the Thirty Years' War, and afterwards grew into a real social danger.

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